Exhibit 23

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	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN NORTHERN DIVISION CARL SHUPE, et al., Plaintiffs, vs. Case No. 1:21-cv-11528-TLL-APP ROCKET COMPANIES, INC., JAY D. FARNER, DANIEL GILBERT, and ROCK HOLDINGS INC., Defendants. ** CONFIDENTIAL ** The Videotaped Deposition of JAY D. FARNER Commencing at 9:18 a.m. Friday, January 26, 2024 Before Renee J. Ogden, CSR-3455, RPR.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	SULLIVAN & CROMWELL LLP Jeffrey T. Scott Sharon L. Nelles 125 Broad Street New York, New York 10004 (212) 558-4000 Scottj@sullcrom.com Nelless@sullcrom.com Attorneys for Individual Defe Rock Holdings, Inc. SHAWN SOLON Rocket Central 1050 Woodward Avenue Detroit, Michigan 48226 (313) 782-8188 Shawnsolon@rocketcentral.com Appearing on behalf of the I Rocket Companies ALSO PRESENT: Lauren Louzod - Video Technicia	ı Defendant
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1 2	Page 2 APPEARANCES:	1 2	TABLE OF CONTE	_
2 3	APPEARANCES: LABATON KELLER SUCHAROW LLP	2 3	WITNESS	_
2 3 4	APPEARANCES: LABATON KELLER SUCHAROW LLP Carol Villegas	2 3 4	WITNESS JAY D. FARNER	NTS PAGE
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1	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 6	168	1	ATTORNEY NELLES: Sharon Nelles, also
2	Exchange with James Eugene Fau		2	from Sullivan & Cromwell, for the witness and
3	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 7	182	3	Rock Holdings.
4	Video		4	ATTORNEY SOLON: Shawn Solon, in-house
5	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 8	184	5	counsel for Rocket.
6	Complaint		6	ATTORNEY SCOTT: Adam Slutsky from
7	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 9	205	7	Goodwin Procter for Rocket Companies.
8	Tweet		8	
9	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 10	220	9	JAY D. FARNER
10	Text Chain		10	was thereupon called as a witness herein, and after
11	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 11	228	11	having first been duly sworn or affirmed to testify
12	Email to Peter Giacchi		12	to the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
13	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 12	247	13	truth, was examined and testified as follows:
14	Email from Natasha Cooksey	250	14	EXAMINATION
15	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 13	258	15	BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
16	Text Message Exchange		16	Q. Good morning, Mr. Farner.
17			17	A. Hi.
18 19			18	Q. My name is Carol Villegas. I'm from the law firm
20			19	Labaton Keller Sucharow, and I represent the
21			20 21	plaintiffs in this action. I'm here to ask you
22			21	some questions today.
23			22	I just want to go over some ground rules. You may have been deposed before, but
24			24	just we want to make sure we get a a clean
25			25	record here.
				record here.
		Page 6		Page 8
1	Friday, January 26, 2024	Page 6	1	Page 8 It's important that the court reporter
1 2	Friday, January 26, 2024 9:18 a.m.	Page 6	1 2	It's important that the court reporter transcribing your answers is able to hear you, so
	9:18 a.m.	-	l	It's important that the court reporter transcribing your answers is able to hear you, so instead of answering with a nod or a shake of the
2 3 4	9:18 a.m. VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Good more	ning. We are	2 3 4	It's important that the court reporter transcribing your answers is able to hear you, so instead of answering with a nod or a shake of the head, I'd like you to answer with audibly so she
2 3 4 5	9:18 a.m. VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Good morn on the record at 9:18 a.m. on January th	ning. We are ne 26th,	2 3 4 5	It's important that the court reporter transcribing your answers is able to hear you, so instead of answering with a nod or a shake of the head, I'd like you to answer with audibly so she can take down what you say.
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Page 9 Page 11 1 Q. And how many times did you meet with the attorneys? 1 would take if you were testifying in a court before 2 2 a judge and a jury? 3 3 A. I do. Q. When? 4 4 A. Yesterday and the day before. Q. Do you understand that your testimony here today is 5 5 going to be treated with the same weight as if it Q. Did you review any documents to prepare for this 6 6 were given in court? deposition? 7 A. Yes, they showed me some documents. 7 A. I do. 8 Q. Is there any reason, medical or otherwise, why you 8 Q. What documents were they? 9 can't provide truthful, complete, and honest 9 ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'm going to instruct 10 testimony today? 10 you not to answer that question on the grounds of 11 A. No. 11 attorney-work product. 12 Q. Have you ever been deposed before? 12 THE WITNESS: Okay. 13 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 13 A. I have. 14 Q. How many times? 14 Q. Did the documents refresh your recollection as to 15 A. Maybe three or four. 15 the events that are related to this lawsuit? 16 16 Q. When? 17 17 Q. Did you talk to anyone else besides your attorneys A. Many years ago in a case, and then again a few 18 about this deposition? 18 years later in another case, and then just about a 19 month or so ago in a case, and now today. 19 A. No. 20 Q. Have any of those cases involved Rocket? 20 Q. Did you talk to anyone else about this litigation 21 A. Well, all cases involved either Rocket or the 21 besides your attorney -- attorneys? previous companies, Rock Financial or 22 22 A. I guess maybe a clarifying question, meaning 23 23 specifically discuss it or -- or certainly people Quicken Loans. 24 Q. So let's start with the -- the first case in time, 24 have seen and asked me if there's a case, and I 25 I guess, moving from the most recent to the least 25 have said, yes. No specifics around what's Page 10 Page 12 1 recent. What was the subject matter of that case? 1 happening or anything that we discussed with my 2 2 A. The most recent deposition I did was a -- a -- a 3 3 Delaware case involving share trading. Q. Did you talk to Dan Gilbert about this deposition? 4 Q. And what about the case before that? 4 5 Q. Did you talk to Dan Gilbert about this litigation? 5 A. I was a witness, maybe a -- I'll get the term 6 wrong, but I believe like a company representative 6 A. No. 7 7 Q. Do you understand that other -- others from Rocket in a case for one of our -- our companies in Texas, 8 a title -- a title company. 8 have been deposed in this lawsuit? Q. Do you remember the name of the title company? A. I have been told that others would be deposed, or 9 9 10 it's my understanding. I don't know who has or who 10 A. No. It's Amrock today. I don't know if it was 11 11 Amrock or Title Source at -- at the time. 12 Q. And what about the third case? 12 Q. Did you review any deposition transcripts of anyone 13 13 else that's been deposed in this lawsuit? A. That was many years ago. It was a case we won. I 14 think we were Rock Financial, maybe Quicken Loans, 14 15 15 at the time. It was an overtime case, mortgage Q. Did you review the complaint in this lawsuit? A. I may have seen the complaint many months or years 16 16 bankers overtime case. 17 Q. Did that case go to trial? ago, but I've not reviewed it. 17 18 18 A. It did. Q. What's your understanding of the claims in this 19 Q. Did you testify at trial? 19 20 20 A. I have two understandings. One is that some A. I did. 21 Q. What did you do to prepare for this deposition 21 comments that I made explaining the company or my 22 22 belief in the long-term growth of the company have today? 23 23 A. I -- I met with the attorneys here. been --24 Q. The attorneys in this room? 24 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Excuse me. Somebody 25 25 A. Three of the four, yes. has a cell phone near a microphone.

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1 THE WITNESS: Me, do you think? 2 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Maybe like near a 3 pocket or some- -- yeah, if you could remove it and 4 just put it a little -- a little distance away. 5 THE WITNESS: How about -- there you go. 6 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: I was just kidding, 7 though. 8 ATTORNEY NELLES: No worries. 9 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: It doesn't have to be 10 too far away. Just a little. 11 ATTORNEY NELLES: Take it away from him. 12 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Go ahead. 13 THE WITNESS: Okay. 14 A. I think you had asked me -- maybe could you repeat 15 the question --16 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 17 Q. Sure. 18 A. -- so I get it right. 19 Q. What is your understanding of the claims in this 20 lawsuit? 21 A. My -- again, my -- my understandings are two topics 22 or themes. One is that over the course of a few 23 interviews or earnings calls, a statement that I 24 made was taken out of context regarding the entire 25 description of the company, my belief in the

But I would talk to clients and review their financial situations, follow up on leads that the company provided, take down, you know, the information about their income and their assets or their credit, determine if we thought they might qualify for a mortgage, try to find a mortgage that was best for them to save money or whatever their goals were, buy a home.

Collect the application documents. At that time there wasn't an internet yet, so most of that was done, like UPS, federal -- FedEx packages

And then put that information together, provide it to an underwriter, who would approve or deny the file, and then we'd close their loan.

- Q. And what about after that? What was your job after
- A. Boy, at -- I think maybe nine or ten months after -- after that, give or take, I had been promoted to what was at the time called a sales director. So I led a group of, you know, 8, 9, 10, 11 mortgage bankers and taught them what I had learned and helped them with their clients and, you know, just kind of led them.
- Q. What about after that?

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long-term growth of the company.

And then the second is that when we did a private sale in late March, we received a phone call from someone that wanted to buy our stock, that we're being told that that was insider

- Q. So I just want to go over your educational and employment background.

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- 10 Q. Can you tell me what your education was, starting 11 from college?
- 12 A. I went to Michigan State University. I graduated 13 with a finance degree.
- 14 Q. Did you get a master's?
 - A. I did not.
 - Q. What was your first job out of school?
- 17 A. Well, I was painting houses. But then I graduated 18 in December of -- December of '95? '94, '95. And 19 my first job was being a mortgage banker at what 20 was called Rock Financial at the time.
- Q. And what are your responsibilities as a mortgage 21 22 broker?
- 23 A. Yeah, we -- we weren't a broker at the time. We --24 25
 - we were bankers because we funded our own loans. We didn't broker them.

A. I believe after that, my official title -- I don't know if it immediately went to vice president or there was another title we had before that, but I then led all of the -- what we called web mortgage bankers.

> So the company had -- at the time, it had two different groups. One group was an outside sales group, and one side was an inside sales group. So I led the inside sales group and kind of came up with strategy, and I worked with marketing to develop Leadflow, and grew -- you know, grew that from a handful, 3- -- 30, 40 people to a large organization.

- Q. What about after that?
- A. If I remember correctly, at that time, Dan and a group of people had bought a company called One Reverse Mortgage. It was in California. And I had been doing the web mortgage banking for seven, eight years maybe.

And so I think at that point in time I stepped in to be the CEO of that company for a period of time. You know, kind of bring it along to -- to kind of get up to speed to what we were doing at Rock -- or -- or Quicken. So, yeah, then I led that -- I led that -- that company for a

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1 short -- fairly short period of time. 2

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- Q. And then what about after that?
- A. After that -- I'm trying to go back, because it was the Great Recession, I was still leading all the bankers, worked through that. Then One Reverse

Then I think I talked to -- to Dan and to Bill Emerson about growing the retail mortgage side, the forward mortgage, as they call it. And one of the things that was holding us back was our marketing. Or we didn't have -- it wasn't growing.

So I believe I came back from One Reverse to Quicken -- it was Quicken Loans at the time -- officially, and became the chief marketing officer of -- of the organization.

- Q. And what about after that?
- A. Well, I don't remember if I was chief marketing officer and president initially, or if I was chief marketing officer for a period of time and then president. But at some point in time, I became the president as well, and so the -- the banking force and the marketing team and maybe a few other teams,
- 24 O. When did you become CEO of Rocket?

I can't recall, reported up to me then.

25 A. In early 2017, I believe. traditional mortgage lender, tech platform, great client service, high speed. And that became so popular that we moved the name -- the Quicken brand we had supported for a long time.

When I became CMO, we were putting a lot of money into the Quicken brand to make sure that it was strong. But the Rocket Mortgage brand was -- you know, that really caught on, and so we moved the -- at some point in time, we moved the --I think first we were maybe doing business as Rocket Mortgage, even though we were Quicken Loans, but then we moved to become Rocket Mortgage as a company.

And then when we went public, we had many -- not many, we had other organizations we were starting to build to support the growing FinTech platform, and so we decided to name the public company "Rocket Companies" because I think it better described all the things we were working

Somewhere after we went public, if I remember properly -- when we -- when we went public, I believe I was the CEO of Rocket Companies and Rocket Mortgage. And then later I was the CEO of Rocket Companies, and Bob Walters became the CEO

Page 18

- Q. And what were your duties as the chief executive officer at Rocket?
- A. You know, over- -- overall leading the company. So helping support the leaders in each area, helping to set strategy for the organization, you know, trying to make good decisions to help the company
- Q. Who did you report to as the CEO?
- A. I think initially -- probably always Dan. On an org chart, it may have had, you know, some other names in there. I worked closely with Bill Emerson for a long period of time.
- Q. Who is Bill Emerson?
- A. Bill was the former CEO of Quicken Loans before I became CEO. And he had been my leader when I was a mortgage banker, when I was a sales director. So we had worked together for quite some time.
- Q. Were you the CEO of Rocket Companies, Inc., or just Rocket Mortgage, LLC?
- A. Well, I think it was kind of a -- a two-step process, if I remember properly. Before we went cub- -- public, we were Rocket Mortgage.

23 Right before I had become CEO, we had 24 launched the Rocket Mortgage product, which was 25 really meant to differentiate us from kind of the

of Rocket Mortgage.

- Q. When you say the "Rocket Mortgage product," are you referring to this FinTech platform?
 - A. Well, initially, what I'm talking about, traditionally a lot of the -- a lot of the application taking was done over -- over the telephone from a mortgage banker. And, you know, as we did a lot of market research, people were saying, I want to -- I do everything else on my phone, I do my banking on my phone, why can't I get my mortgage on -- on the computer, on my phone.

So the initial Rocket Mortgage product was the ability for the client to go in and get virtually fully approved in about seven or eight minutes with -- on the computer or on the phone.

Then, I think, later the meaning of that kind of expanded to other technologies that we built that would make the mortgage process more efficient, more streamlined.

So that's what I'm referring to when I say "Rocket Mortgage product."

- Q. During your time as CEO of Rocket, did you communicate with your employees via email?
- A. During the time I was the CEO of Rocket Mortgage, did I use email? Yes.

Pages 17 to 20

Page 21 Page 23 1 1 Q. Do you use text messaging on your cell phone to referring to. If you need me to remind you, just 2 communicate with Rocket employees about Rocket 2 let me know. 3 business? 3 A. Okay. 4 4 A. Sparingly. Q. So do you have an understanding of what the term 5 Q. Did you use a firm -- a company-issued laptop to 5 "loan origination" means? 6 communicate through email with your employees? 6 A. Probably not. Because I -- I've heard the term 7 7 A. I had a -- I had a laptop and a desktop, or used in a variety of ways in the industry. We 8 8 perhaps -- I think, somewhere along the way, the might use it differently than other people, so we 9 laptop became the desktop, right, where you just 9 probably need to be more specific. 10 plugged it in, so it may have been the same 10 Q. Sure. 11 11 computer. Have -- have you ever used the term 12 Q. Are you aware that documents -- excuse me. Let me 12 "loan origination" at Rocket? 13 13 start that question over. A. I'm sure that I've used that term from time to 14 Are you aware that documents you 14 time, and others have used the term, yes. 15 authored or received during your time at Rocket 15 Q. Can you tell me what loan origination means, in 16 16 were collected and produced to plaintiffs in this your words, as you use it at Rocket? 17 action? 17 A. It kind of covers a broad category of statuses. So 18 A. The documents I authored, meaning an email that 18 in some cases, people would be referencing 19 I -- I had sent or --19 something that we call a registration, which is, in 20 Q. Yes. 20 many cases, the beginning of a loan origination. 21 A. I would assume so, yes. 21 I think, in other cases, people might 22 Q. Without revealing any communications with your 22 use the term "loan origination" and reference it 23 23 lawyers, do you know how your documents were towards something we called a folder, which was --24 searched for and collected in this action? 24 if we're going back to my description of my job, it 25 A. I don't. 25 was the collection of the documentation. Page 22 Page 24 1 Q. Was your personal cell phone searched? 1 In other cases, people would use the 2 2 A. I gave my cell phone to the lawyers, yes. term "loan origination" to describe a closed loan. 3 3 Q. So, Mr. Farner, I'm going to ask you some questions Probably, in other cases, people might 4 about Rocket's mortgage loan origination business. 4 use that term to describe a funded loan. 5 5 And I'm interested in Q3 2020 through Q2 2021. So, kind of, in context, I -- I guess, 6 A. Q3 2020, so October, November, December. 6 it could mean all of those things, some of those 7 7 Q. Let's probably start in August of 2020, right 8 around the IPO. 8 Q. What is a closed loan? 9 A. Okay. So when we went -- when we went public 9 A. At Rocket, a closed loan is a loan that we've 10 10 through it. I'm sorry. It's just that -- I'll do originated, meaning we've taken the application, 11 11 my best, obviously -underwritten, and a client has gone to a closing 12 Q. Sure. 12 and signed the closing documents. 13 13 Then, if there's a right of recision I meant --14 A. -- because I don't really think about the business 14 period, that period has passed, so a closed loan. 15 15 Q. And what is a funded loan at Rocket? that way, but... Q. I'm happy to remind you of the time frame that 16 16 A. Well, the end of that process is, we close, and I 17 17 we're talking about. guess, there's two funded loans, to be clear. 18 18 If you're talking to operations or a A. Okay. 19 Q. And it's the time frame that this lawsuit is 19 mortgage banker, they might think of a funded loan 20 20 focused on. So when I say "relevant time period," as a loan that the client has received their funds. 21 I'm talking about August 2020 to the end of 21 If you're talking to somebody in capital 22 22 May 2021. markets or accounting, they may be referencing it A. Okay. 23 23 to a time when we have sold the loan and we've

Q. So I'm going to ask a number of questions about the

relevant time period. That's the time period I'm

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received the funds.

Q. During the relevant time period, how did Rocket

Page 25 Page 27 1 make money? 1 How many more phones will she buy? No marketing 2 2 A. I'm going to maybe ask a clarifying question. cost. How many apps will she download? 3 3 Q. Sure. And so, when we went public, and we were 4 4 A. Like, received cash, or like, make money on the thinking about what we were doing as a company, of 5 P&L, or what do you -- what do you mean when you 5 course, we want to be the most efficient mortgage 6 6 say "make money"? lender. Of course, we want to have investment in 7 7 Q. Sure. Let me ask it a different way. the brand, investment in the technology. 8 8 During the relevant time period, what It was all based on acquiring clients 9 9 who are incredibly happy, so we're developing this was Rocket's business? 10 A. During the relevant time period, Rocket's business 10 long-term revenue stream, much like a SaaS model or 11 11 was the accu- -- the acquisition of clients, a tech company, not like a mortgage originator. 12 building our client database. One of the primary 12 Q. When you say "SaaS," do you mean Software as a 13 13 ways that we did that was through what you called Service? A. I -- I do, yes. 14 loan origination. 14 15 Q. So as part of Rocket's home loan origination 15 But I think broader, and we've touched 16 16 on this before, when we moved from Rocket Mortgage business, did Rocket originate refinance loans? 17 17 to Rocket Companies, we were -- we were shifting A. Yes. We always had done, as far as I can -- as far 18 18 the organization -- I'm going to take a step back. as I can remember being at the company, we always 19 A traditional mortgage lender, or you 19 did rate and term refinance. We did cash out 20 said earlier a mortgage broker, that's a one-time 20 refinance. 21 transaction. I write a loan, I get paid, I'm done. 21 In many cases, we used to do home equity 22 22 Maybe next week you go, their business isn't even lines of credit, if they were available. And, of 23 there any longer. 23 course, purchase loans.

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technology, marketing, data, Rocket Autos, Rocket Homes, was to transform kind of the traditional mortgage space into a FinTech platform. That -- that's important, because it changes how you think about things.

The -- one of the primary purposes of

all of the investment we had been making in

So when I say our mission was to acquire clients, if you're only a loan originator, then all you really care about is that one loan you do.

But if you're a FinTech platform, the driving -- one of the driving factors for you is the acquisition of the client.

For us, we had a 90-percent retention rate. That means that once a client is in the door the first time, 90 percent of the time, they get the next mortgage, they're doing it with us.

The first time, there's marketing costs involved, in most cases. The second time, there isn't. So it completes -- it, like, just changes the dynamic of the business.

More like when Apple sells you a phone, maybe it costs them a lot of money to get you in the door the first time to buy that phone -- I don't know if you have Apple phone or an Android -- but then, they're thinking about you 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, what's the value of that client?

marketplace to -- again, to acquire clients. Again, thinking about that client as, like, the lifetime value, not just the first transaction.

And so, in the time frame -- again, going back to the time frame that you're referencing, I think, in the beginning of that, or through most of that, we were probably more focused on refinance transactions, because that was the fastest or best way to -- for us to grow our client base.

And we really shifted our marketing and

spend based on what was most attractive in the

- Q. So, in terms of refinance or purchase, what type of loans resulted in the most revenue for Rocket?
- A. Well, that's -- that is a tricky question, because you could look at the type of refinance. But really, the loan size is going to drive that.

So, I -- I guess I wouldn't necessarily -- or I didn't look at it specifically like refinance or purchase, I would think -- again, being the CMO for a long period of time, a purchase transaction in California, where the average purchase price was \$800,000 and the average mortgage was \$500,000, would generate more revenue. Even if the gain-on-sale margin was two, then a refinance transaction in Cleveland, Ohio, where the loan balance was 120,000.

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So we would look at those attributes of a loan, and then try to market to drive the most revenue based on the geographic, the conversion rate. Maybe it's more competitive in California. So even though the loan balances are higher, we're in a fight with ten other competitors, where if we market in Iowa, there's only two.

So the gain-on-sale margin might be higher or lower, but the conversion rate might be double, or my marketing costs might be less.

So -- so there's not a -- I can't give you a -- a direct, straight, because it -- it varied on all of those -- all of those things.

Hope that makes sense.

- Q. During the relevant time period, did Rocket originate more refinance loans or more purchase loans?
- A. Yes. Like we talked about, even though the pandemic had -- I'm not going to say it was -- well, it certainly wasn't over, but, you know, the government was still driving down interest rates.

And so, at that point in time, it made more sense to dedicate the resources and the marketing dollar for the refinance transactions. So I think we did more refinance than purchase for

looking to pay off any credit card debt or anything else, the only purpose for my refinance would be that I want to save money on the borrowing cost.

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Then someone who, let's say, has an interest rate of 4 1/2 percent would be -- would benefit if the current rate was 3 percent. But if they had a rate of 4 1/2 percent and the rate was 6, then they wouldn't benefit. So those clients, you know, the -- the fluctuation of the interest rate matters.

It also matters duration of time, because someone might be at 4 1/2 percent on a 30-year but they've paid down the mortgage seven years, and now, even if the rate is a little higher on a 15-year, they're -- they're carrying costs would be lower if they refinanced to a 15-year. So they might even move to a different mortgage program, even if the rate was a bit -- a bit higher.

So, you have to look at all of those -- those numbers, but that's -- hopefully, that example explains that.

- Q. Do you have an understanding of what Rocket's direct-to-consumer business segment is?
- A. I believe so.

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Over the course of time, I remember looking at some report from, like, 2017 to 2020 or 2019, something of that nature, where someone had broken down all of our business, rate sensitive, not rate sensitive.

that period of time.

And I -- I think, during that period of time, the majority, meaning more than 50 percent, was non-rate sensitive, so cash-out transactions, purchase transactions, home equity, those types of things.

So we had the ability to do multiple things, but because the Fed had cut rates so low, we were leaning into.

And actually, going back to that concept of the lifetime value of a client -- the term "a lot" can be -- many of our loans were repeat clients, so people that had already been in our servicing book, who had a higher interest rate, who were just coming back to -- to lower their rate. So that caused the -- I think the refinance number to go up a bit, as well.

- Q. You've used the term "rate sensitive," can you explain what that means?
- A. Sure. If I don't need cash out, and I'm not

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- Q. What is it?
- A. It's the segment we looked at where we directly marketed to clients, or we worked with third-party partners to market to clients to generate what we would call leads, client inquiries.

And then our mortgage bankers would, you know, assist those clients and help them get a mortgage.

- Q. So is a direct-to-consumer business segment considered a channel at Rocket?
- A. Yes. At -- at some point in time, when we really started defining or breaking down the different ways that we could grow market share, we would have direct-to-consumer. We would have a TPO or -- or wholesale. We would have our realtor network. We would have the relationships that we had within that time, I believe Charles Schwab or E*TRADE.

So there were multiple, but I think we really thought of it as two channels. One was one where we marketed or -- or interacted with the consumer directly, and the other channel was one where -- third party, where we worked with, as I just described, wholesale or Charles Schwab or whoever to -- to help introduce that client to us.

Q. So was the direct-to-consumer channel also referred

Pages 29 to 32

- to as the "retail channel" internally at Rocket?

 A. I -- I've heard that, yes.
- Q. And when you talk about third parties or
 wholesalers, are you referring to Rocket Pro TPO
 business?
 - A. That'd be one aspect of it, yes. But, as I said, there are quite a few other aspects that we've built out in addition to that.
 - Q. So can you explain a little more what Rocket Pro TPO was?

A. Well, you had started off by using the term "broker," so there are mortgage brokers in the country. They're originating loans or taking applications. In some cases, they have the ability to underwrite the file. In other cases, they don't. I think it's called delegated underwriting.

So we would offer those brokers a Rocket product, Rocket technology in some cases. Really, the Rocket client experience is, I think, what drove a lot of the brokers to use us.

They would help the client, take the app, and submit the documentation to us. We'd underwrite the file, give them approval, and the loan would close. We'd pay the broker their portion for the mortgage. Then we would have the

which is the servicing rights. It's called MSRs, mortgage servicing rights. And that's what you get paid to collect the monthly payment from the client.

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And we had made the decision, quite a few years earlier -- earlier than 2020, but it's relevant for 2020, that we also wanted to be able a very large servicer. And so we didn't sell off the mortgage servicing rights in many cases, we retained them. So as opposed to getting the revenue when you funded the loan, you're waiting, and you're getting a little piece of it every mortgage payment.

And when you write a loan or close a loan, you think to yourself, okay, well, based on the current interest rate, I believe this client is going to pay the mortgage for five years, six years. So you're -- you're speculating what the revenue will be, but you don't know for sure what the revenue will be, because things change, a pandemic happens and the Fed cuts rates. And all of those loans you thought were going to be worth five years of payments become worth one year of payments.

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- mortgage. And in most cases, we would service that mortgage. In some cases, we would sell off the servicing.
 - Q. Who would you sell off the servicing to?
 - A. Oh, there's a variety of large servicers in the country. Somebody in capital markets could probably give you a better answer than me.
 - Q. Would you also sell off the loans?
 - A. Yeah, that -- so maybe taking a step back. That's an -- that's an important piece. There are like -- there's multiple components that make up the revenue of a -- of a mortgage.

Almost all loans that the country does and -- and almost all that we do, the loan itself, like the -- the financial instrument, will get -- will get put together in a pool, and that's traded, mortgage-backed securities. And so they're either Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, FHA.

So they get the loans, they have the data, they understand how the loans operate. They understand the default rates of these loans. They understand the weighted interest rate, and everyone can see what's happening because you're trading these mortgage-backed securities.

Then you have the -- the other side,

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But we decided to become a mortgage

servicer because of the other thing I $\operatorname{--}$ I talked about, which is if you stop thinking about the client as a one-time transaction and you start thinking about the client as a lifetime transaction, then the gain on sale and the revenue you earn, the first time because less and less important because you're thinking about the value of the client over time.

And one way to make sure that you continue to have interaction with that client over time is to service their loan. Now I have a reason to speak with them every single month. I can tell them about their taxes, their escrows, those sorts of things.

And so we decided to become a mortgage servicer so we would, A, we're good at it, provide a great client experience, because some people were not happy after we would get somebody else to service their mortgage. But it also gives us a marketing approach to the client that allows us to expand that lifetime value, drive up that client retention rate.

And then the third is that it's a natural hedge, or it balances. So if you're looking at your business and saying, you know,

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rates are going to go up and down, will it be more challenging -- and everybody understands as rates change or rates go up, it gets harder and harder to originate a loan. It's common knowledge. But if rates are going up, the same thing is happening at my -- on this book of -- of millions of clients. I've -- I wrote that loan thinking the client was only going to make four and a half years of payments or three, but now, because rates have gone up, they're actually going to make six years of payments.

So from, like, my position as a CEO, I'm -- I'm trying to think, okay, what's the lifetime value of the client I'm originating? That's more important to me than the immediate revenue. Plus, I know as the rates rise, I'm actually gaining revenue on the -- on the mortgage servicing side of the house.

So it becomes a nice balance because the goal -- the goal is to not -- the goal is to have long-term strategy in view for the business and not react to things you can't predict, like the up and down changes in interest rate.

And so that servicing book gave us the ability -- or gave me the ability to have more

1 receive mortgages; is that right?

A. Yes, but you had asked me whether TPO was a channel before. So that's what I'm -- I'm trying to make sure I don't...

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- 5 Q. Oh, sure. So I might ask you the same question --
- 6 A. Okay.

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- Q. -- more than once.
- 8 A. Okay.
 - Q. Yeah. So let me just ask you again: Was Rocket Pro TPO's business segment also referred to as a channel internally at Rocket?
 - A. Well, like -- like we talked about before, it -- it was an -- an avenue. But I think when we used the term "channel," we -- it was broader than that. It was a TPO, The Real Estate Network, the State Farm agent network. I think E*TRADE was in there during that period of time.

So it -- it was -- I don't -- I think when we said "channel," it was direct-to-consumer, or we were talking about this broader third-party channel where TPO would be a portion of it.

Q. So would you have called that the third-party channel or the wholesale channel?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

A. I'm sure somebody would refer to it as a wholesale

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channel, yes.

- BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
 - Q. Would you have referred to it as a wholesale
 - A. I -- I may have from time to time.
- Q. Were there other channels that brought in business for the home loan origination part of Rocket's husiness?
 - A. Were -- were the other channels?
 - Q. Were -- were there other channels beyond retail and wholesale?
 - A. Sure. We just talked about those other components, the third party partners. Charles Schwab was a big one. The Real Estate Network was, at the time, you know, was an exciting opportunity for us. We were signing up other -- the -- the concept -- maybe think about this, so a consumer can go to a mortgage banker or a mortgage broker, but they're also -- like if they're -- they're buying a house, they're already talking to a real estate agent, so why make them go to yet another party if the real estate agent could help them. That's why we rolled out that piece. Or they have a financial planner, like a Charles Schwab or a -- an E*TRADE, if I remember it was one. So let them also help with

confidence in knowing that we could stick to the long-term market share strategy that we were approaching.

- Q. Do you remember during the relevant time period how much of -- how much mortgage servicing provided the company in terms of revenue?
- A. Oh, I -- no, I couldn't tell you the specific amount, but it's millions and millions of dollars.
- Q. What about as a percentage compared to loan origination?
- 11 A. I couldn't tell you the exact percentage.
- 12 Q. Was it larger or smaller?
- 13 A. I believe it was smaller.
 - Q. So would you have also referred to Rocket Pro TPO's business as a channel internally at Rocket?
 - A. Maybe I missed -- when you asked me the question, what -- help me understand the difference in those two questions. I don't want to...

Q. Sure.

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19 20 So we have the Rocket's 21 direct-to-consumer business, and sometimes you 22 refer to that as "retail" internally; is that 23 riaht?

24 A. Yes.

Q. And it's also considered a channel for which you

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So there were those channels, and there are probably more I'm missing right now.

- Q. I guess I'm just trying to understand the -- was what you just described with Charles Schwab and The Real Estate Network, is that part of the wholesale channel or is that considered something different?
- A. That's not -- we didn't consider that wholesale because I think -- again, these terms, much like "loan origination," get tossed around, and so you'll find people using them broadly in certain

But I think wholesale is where the person -- the broker is receiving that fee on the closing statement. And these others, they were third party, but I think their compensation, excuse me, was different. So technically, I don't think we considered it wholesale. But, again, the terms probably were used interchangeably from time to time.

Q. So I just want to go over some metrics we'll be talking about today. You've mentioned some of them already. And I'm going to list out some terms, and I just would like you to tell me if you know what they are and what they mean and how they were used And then, as I said before, kind of under that line, you have to think, okay, what's the lifetime value of this client, because that can impact your decision on what you're willing to do the loan for of all those other components.

- 6 Q. Is "closed-loan volume" a term used at Rocket?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. And what is closed-loan volume?
 - A. It would be the day or week or, I suppose, month, number of -- well, people used it both ways.

Sometimes people would use that term to describe the units or the number of clients, even though, technically, the term "volume" would -- would speak to the loan balances, I think, added together that had closed over a period of time.

- Q. So you said people used it both ways. What was the other way people used it?
- A. The unit. So someone might say we -- you know, someone might ask: What's the closed-loan volume? And someone would say: Oh, it was -- we did -- we did 3,000 loans today. That's actually the num--- and, again, going back and forth, that's the number of clients that we would close, so...

Which in many cases, was a more relevant number than the actual loan sizes, because you're

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- 1 internally at Rocket.
- 2 A. Okay.
 - Q. Is gain-on-sale margin a term used at Rocket?
- 4 A. Yes, it is.
 - Q. And what does gain-on-sale margin mean, as it was used in Rocket?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form. You can answer.

A. Okay. Again, I think we've kind of talked about this. When you're originating a loan, you're looking at the cost to acquire that loan. You know, is it a hundred bucks, a thousand bucks, two thousand bucks, \$6,000.

You're looking at the loan size. You're looking at the type of loan that it is; FHA, Fannie, Freddie, all those will kind of impact the value.

And those things -- some of those things -- well, then you have your gain-on-sale, what are you going to earn on that loan?

And then you're thinking about your cost to produce the loan, the banker commission, the operations cost. So the gain-on-sale is part of that calculation to determine what you might earn on that loan.

- thinking -- again, you understand my thinking about lifetime value of -- of a client. But I've -- I've heard people give the answer both ways for that -- for that question.
 - Q. Is "gain-on-sale revenue" a term used at Rocket?
- A. I -- I'm sure it was used. It's not a term thatwas used frequently.
 - Q. What is gain-on-sale revenue?
 - A. Like I said, it's not a term that's -- so I would -- I could speculate on what it would be, but it's not a term I would -- I would use because I just use revenue.

So would you like me to speculate on what I think it might be?

- Q. No.
- 16 A. Okay.
 - Q. When you say "revenue," what did you mean by that?
- 18 A. The amount of money or profit -- not profit, but
 19 top-line -- I mean, revenue is revenue -- that you
 20 could earn on a particular product. It could be a
 21 mortgage. It could be a personal loan.

And then, of course, the question would be, okay, is that this transaction revenue, or is that lifetime value or revenue. But that's before -- I should take that -- in most cases,

Pages 41 to 44

Page 45 Page 47 1 had strategies to grow them, so I -- I -- maybe I 1 that's before any other expenses. 2 2 I have seen other people back out can't articulate the exact way we talked about the 3 3 certain things before they use revenue. But for key performance indicator, but growing market 4 4 share, growing lifetime value. us, it was the top-line revenue that we would earn 5 on a loan. 5 I was focused on marketing, marketing 6 Q. Did you use the term "key performance indicators" 6 efficiencies. So to grow lifetime value, the 7 7 while you were at Rocket? better your marketing works, the lower your cost to 8 8 A. I did. acquire, the better off you're going to be. 9 Q. And what were you referring to when you used the 9 And those are -- those, for me, are 10 10 term "key performance indicators"? probably the things that add the most value to the 11 11 A. So KPIs, or key performance indicators, is a very company. 12 common term used in most businesses. Specifically, 12 Q. Was gain-on-sale margin a KPI that you focused on? 13 13 A. Again, going back to that definition of KPI, as we would set the strategy for the organization, certainly, in any business, people are going to 14 we would come up with something called OKRs, 14 15 outcomes -- I don't even -- I couldn't even tell 15 have a way they try to think about the generation 16 16 you the specific. of first-time revenue and lifetime revenue, and 17 17 But these are objectives -- objectives gain-on-sale was a component of that. 18 18 and key results. Sorry about that. It's been a As I already mentioned, I think the 19 19 while. difference between Rocket Companies and Rocket and 20 And so these -- these are what we're 20 a traditional mortgage lender is the -- is the 21 working on as a team to contemplate how we're going 21 disruption of that thinking. 22 22 A traditional mortgage lender is going to grow the company, grow market share. 23 23 And then, underneath those objectives -to be focused on gain-on-sale revenue because 24 24 and key results were the -- were the KPIs that they're only thinking about what am I earning at 25 would drive those strategies. So that's what I 25 that moment in time. Page 46 Page 48 1 would think about. 1 The transformation that we went through 2 2 I saw other areas of the business come was to think about the acquisition of that client 3 3 up with their own KPIs that they might think are and the value that that client could bring us over 4 important. 4 the lifetime that we kept engaged with them; 5 5 So I'm sure there were lots of them, the mortgage, real estate, hopefully auto, personal 6 dilemma, of course, being the definition of "key," 6 loans, HELOCs, perhaps insurance. 7 7 because what's key to me, like I said, tying to the At one point in time during that period, 8 8 OKRs versus what -- if I was in facilities, I might I think we were talking about partnering with 9 think that what's key is making sure that the 9 financial planners. So although a --10 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Just hold on one 10 bathroom's clean. Okay. That's fine. 11 11 But -- so it's really kind of key to second. 12

12 whatever area a person was working on. 13 Q. So which KPIs were key for you during your time at 14 15 A. During my time at Rocket? 16 Q. During --17 A. 27 years? 18 Q. No. Let -- let's say during the relevant time. 19 Let me ask the question again. 20 Which KPIs were key for you during the 21 relevant time period? 22 A. Boy, I mean, that's going back quite a few years, 23 so -- but I -- I think I've talked about some of

things that were most important to me.

And I would imagine that we -- I know we

Sorry.

A. Yes. So -- so gain-on-sale margin would be a component, but not a key -- not probably my top key components because of the real value of the organization was being created through the acquisition of -- of the lifetime value of clients.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. What about closed-loan volume? Would that be a KPI that you focused on?
- A. Yes. I looked at closed-loan volume because it represents whether we're going to be able to grow market share or not grow market share.
- Q. And what about gain-on-sale revenue? Is that a KPI that you focused on?

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A. Like I said -- and I -- it -- it could be there, and perhaps -- I just -- I don't recall that being -- revenue and gain-on-sale, I don't -- I don't know, so I'd say no.

Q. Are you aware that Rocket told the market that these metrics were KPIs in its quarterly fillings with the SEC?

And by "these metrics," I'm referring to gain-on-sale margin, closed loan volume, and gain-on-sale revenue.

- A. I -- again, I don't know the term that Rocket used, but I know we put these metrics in forms, sure.
- Q. Do you know what the "primary-secondary spread" is referring to?
- A. I believe I have a cursory understanding. It would be -- someone in capital markets would be the right person to give you the specific to that.
 - Q. Tell me what your understanding of the primary-secondary spread is.
- A. I -- I believe it's, you know, as you are originating and closing loans, you -- you have one idea of what the value of that loan is. And then there's the actual, I guess, value that the loan is going to trade at.
- And I think that spread can compress or

- closed loan volume at Rocket?
- A. I don't believe so. I think marketing spend, you know, sales skill, those sorts of things probably have more of an impact on how many loans we're going to write.
- Q. Do changes to the primary-secondary spread affect gain-on-sale margin at Rocket?
- A. Again, probably a better question for someone in capital markets. My understanding is that the folks in capital markets, they -- they know what's happening in the market. Everybody does. This is on your Bloomberg screen. I've walked -- I've walked by their areas, and they have the screens up everywhere, and they are looking at that.

But they get to set -- they get to set the target price every morning. And sometimes they'll adjust it two or three times a day. So I -- I would say that capital markets would have the ability to change pricing, so if they wanted to offset other changes that they're seeing taking place in mortgage-backed security trades.

- Q. When you say "they get to set target price" -"pricing every morning," what do you mean by that?
- A. So in the old days, we had something called a rate -- a rate sheet. It's on the computer now.

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- grow, depending on what's happening in the markets or the economic situation in the -- in the country or the world, I guess.
 - Q. Do changes in mortgage interest rates affect the primary-secondary spread?
- A. I believe they -- they -- no, I couldn't say for sure if that's the exact driver of it. Again, probably Bill -- Bill Banfield or someone who does this for a living could give you a better answer.
- Q. Do you know if changes in the mortgage -- mortgage interest rate is a factor that could affect the primary-secondary spread?
 - A. I don't know if the change in mortgage interest rate is the factor. Maybe the change in mortgage interest rate changes other things that might be the factor. But, again, probably best for a capital markets person to answer.
- Q. Is the primary-secondary spread something that you discussed internally at Rocket during the relevant time period?
- A. As you can probably tell, I -- I'm certain that people in capital markets or so forth discussed it.
 It was not something that was a hot discussion point for me.
- Q. Do changes in the primary-secondary spread affect

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But a mortgage banker and the mortgage banker leadership, they have flexibility, but within a -- a range of -- of -- of rate or -- or fees or discounts. There's a variety of little components that could -- could make up the economics for the client.

But capital markets will -- when they publish that rate sheet or put the information into the computer, they're going to set what the interest rate is that day to offer the client and what they're -- they're targeting to earn on the loan.

Again, that was not specific because what they don't know is, okay, I set that at 9:00 a.m., but I didn't know that this marketing initiative was launching -- we talked about this earlier -- in California. And so that brought more loans in than I expected from that region. So -- or I didn't know that the divisional vice president in this area was going to run an incentive, and that incentive allowed the bankers to reduce the earning by 3/8 of a point or something like that.

So they're -- they're putting -- we have to have something to react to. But then throughout the day, there's other variables or other changes

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1 that leadership could make that would alter that. 2 THE WITNESS: Can I get -- could you 3 grab me a bottle of water or something? Thanks. 4 I'm doing a lot of talking here. Thank you. 5 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 6 Q. Do you have an understanding as to whether changes 7

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- to the primary, secondary spread affect gain-on-sale revenue at Rocket? A. Again, I didn't use the gain-on-sale revenue, but
- im- -- implying that or -- or thinking that there's a, you know, obviously gain-on-sale margin is driving that. We already talked about that, that I believe that can affect the value of a trade or how loans are traded, but that's information or data that's understood that then capital markets can adjust accordingly.
- Q. Do you have an understanding as to whether capital markets was responsible for modeling how rising interest rates may affect the primary, secondary
- A. I would find it interesting for capital markets to be able to model how that would work, because, if anything, they would go out and probably look at the MBA or Fannie or Freddie or JPMorgan Chase, someone who has a lot more analysts than we do, to

primary-secondary spread?

- A. No, I don't know if a specific person is responsible for that.
- Q. But is the primary-secondary spread something that capital markets would attract?
- A. Yeah, I think every mortgage-backed security trader needs to track information that matters to how they trade their assets.
- Q. At Rocket, did you ever use the term "turn time" in the context of home loan origination?
- A. Yes. We used that term probably, again, in a variety of ways, maybe depending on the area that was using the term.
- Q. When you say the "area that was using the term," what do you mean by that?
- A. Well, mortgage banking might use that term and define how quickly the client returns the documentation. Remember, we discussed the old -the older term. So for them, it's, I wrote the app on Monday, we should get the folder back by Tuesday. But this banker's turn time is 72 hours. They're slow at getting that back.

Operations may look at that and say turn time is how quickly does an underwriter underwrite a file or how long does -- a "file" being a loan or

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try to understand what people think might happen.

But my experience over the almost 30 years was, outside of about a few days in either direction, mostly looking backwards, it's very hard to predict what will happen in the markets. You could be sitting here today and a world event could happen tomorrow and it changes everything. And I have lived through that multiple times in my career, from the late '90s -- so what was that called? The dotcom bubble to, unfortunately, the attack on the World Trade Centers to the Great Recession.

I can remember sitting in the office on a Thursday or Wednesday in November, out of the blue, the Fed cut interest rates, and everything changed. So -- and, again, the pandemic. I mean, January of whatever that was, 2020, no one had any idea what was going to happen in March.

So -- so it would be hard for capital -someone in capital markets to say, I'm going to put together a model. But in terms of its viability or to use that to make decisions, probably not wise.

Q. Do you know if anyone in capital markets was responsible for putting together a model of how rising interest rates might affect the

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- a client -- or how long does a file stay from 2 application received to clo- -- it just -- it could 3 mean any -- it's a broad term that kind of speaks 4 to one status of a loan to another status of a 5 loan.
 - Q. At Rocket, did you ever use the term "pipeline" in the context of home loan originations?
 - A. We did.
 - O. And what does "pipeline" mean in that context?
 - A. I know this -- it would be eight different versions of that. It could mean a -- an account executive's pipeline of mortgage brokers that they're talking to that would sign up for Rocket.

It could be a mortgage banker's pipeline of clients they're talking to who they think they are going to offer a mortgage to.

In operations, it could be all the loans in an underwriter's pipeline that they had to underwrite in the next day. It -- it -- again, it's a broad term, just really describing what's the work that you're -- that -- that you've got -that you're working on?

	Page 57		Page 59
1	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: All right. Derick,	1	Q. So, Mr. Farner, you have a document marked as
2	can you get Tab 31 and mark that as an exhibit?	2	Exhibit Farner 1 in front of you. Please take your
3	MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION:	3	time to review it and let me know when you're
4	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 1	4	ready?
5	Email from Rachel Rizik	5	A. Thank you.
6	10:22 a.m.	6	Okay.
7	ATTORNEY SCOTT: So are you going to	7	O. Thank you.
8	mark them with deposition stickers, or you mark	8	So I'm just going to start with the
9	them online?	9	cover email, which is an email from Rachel Rizik to
10	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: We're marking them	10	Pete Mareskas, and I'm going to note that you are
11	online.	11	not a sender or receiver on this email, right?
12	ATTORNEY SCOTT: Online, okay.	12	A. Correct.
13	ATTORNEY CIVIDINI: It should be up.	13	Q. Do you see where it says: "Attachments, Project
14	ATTORNEY SCOTT: It's up. And what was	14	Destiny"?
15	this marked as, 31, did you say?	15	A. Yes.
16	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: This is Farner 1.	16	Q. What is Project Destiny?
17	ATTORNEY SCOTT: Oh, Farner 1.	17	A. It was the name we used internally as we were
18	THE WITNESS: You guys don't have a	18	working on taking the company public.
19	I'd like to read it. The print is so damn small.	19	Q. And do you see the subject line: "CODM package"?
20	ATTORNEY SCOTT: They're going to put it	20	A. I do.
21	up I think	21	Q. Do you have an understanding of what "CODM package"
22	THE WITNESS: Okay.	22	is referring to?
23	ATTORNEY SCOTT: on this computer	23	A. No. I'm not as far as I can remember, I've not
24	somehow.	24	heard that before. So I'm trying to quickly digest
25	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Okay. Jeff, do you	25	what was in the document. But, no, I don't quite
23	ATTORNET VILLEGAS. Ordy. Jell, do you	23	what was in the document. But, no, I don't quite
	Page 58		Page 60
1	Page 58 have the website Agile Law on up there?	1	Page 60 understand.
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Page 61 Page 63 1 1 A. I haven't, no. about -- and I think I saw in this paper somewhere, 2 Q. So if you look at the bottom right of the document, 2 it speaks to some of the primary key metrics being 3 it has what we call a Bates number. And I'm going 3 cost to acquire lifetime value. 4 4 to be referring to the last three numbers when we I thought of these growing, smaller 5 go through this document just so it's easy for you 5 companies as being very important to the future of 6 6 to find what I'm talking about. the organization. 7 7 So let's start with the Bates ending in I would have to speculate that from --8 8 567. Just let me know when you're there. this appears to be written from an accounting 9 A. Okay. 9 perspective, that there's some sort of a -- I don't 10 Q. So do you see where it says: "Issue Number 1. Who 10 want to say rule, but guideline that looks at 11 is the chief operating decision maker, CODM" in the 11 revenue or profit today at this moment. I think it 12 middle of the page? 12 was -- I saw June of 2020, and used that to 13 13 determine what might be -- from an accounting 14 Q. And then do you see where it says, two small 14 purpose -- may be material or immaterial. 15 paragraphs below that: "Based on the analysis 15 Q. So did you consider what you called these growing, 16 16 above, management determined that Jay Farner is smaller companies to be material to Rocket? 17 17 ultimately responsible for allocating resources and A. I don't know if I would have thought of them in the 18 assessing the performance of the company. As such, 18 term "material." I certainly would think that they 19 management concluded he is the CODM in accordance 19 were important. And I think I've given some 20 with ASC 280-10-50-5? 20 examples. 21 A. Yeah, just to specify, I don't know if this is -- I 21 But to grow in a purchase market, 22 thought I read in here somewhere that this was a --22 helping guide the client through the real estate 23 23 a white paper. process is as important as getting the mortgage, 24 O. Mm-hmm. 24 and so, even if Rocket Homes didn't necessarily 25 A. So I don't know if this is someone's 25 earn revenue directly from a real estate Page 62 Page 64 1 recommendation. I can't speak to the validity, I 1 commission, the fact that they would be engaged in 2 2 suppose, but it appears that one -- someone wrote the process to assist the client and ultimately 3 3 this up and made this suggestion in this white that helps us get their mortgage, still winds up 4 4 benefitting the organization, even though you can't 5 5 Q. Did you ever consider yourself the chief operating measure that on a document somewhere. 6 6 decision-maker at Rocket? And so that's how I thought about the 7 7 A. As we talked about, I -- I didn't think of -- I ecosystem that we were building. Again, going back 8 wasn't familiar with that term. And I -- I'd say, 8 to the -- you're spending a marketing dollar, your 9 9 as the CEO, I thought of myself as a person who was requirement -- you're acquiring a client, and then 10 10 responsible for making decisions, but along with my you're thinking about the value of that client over 11 11 team and a lot of the people that were experts in the lifetime. I'm thinking what's going to be 12 their field, and that -- that I trusted. 12 important in the coming years as we build this 13 13 Q. Do you see where it says, "Analysis" on the bottom company. 14 quarter of the page --14 Q. So could you just go to the next page, which ends 15 15 A. Yes. in 568? And I'm focused on the section underneath Q. -- and there's a bolded paragraph below that? 16 16 17 17 Can you just read that to yourself, and Do you see that paragraph? 18 let me know when you're done? 18 A. The -- the footnote or the -- the "per 19 A. Okay. I'm done. 19 Section 211"? 20 20 Q. Okay. Do you have an understanding as to why this Q. Starting "per Section 211."

So I have a question starting at the

organizational chart, Bob Walters, President and

Chief Operating Officer, is primarily responsible

for managing the partner network channel of

second sentence, which reads: "Based on the above

white paper referred to the "remaining entities

entities to be taken public are immaterial"?

within combined financial statements of the legal

A. I don't have a direct definition of what that would

be. Certainly, from my perspective, as I thought

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Quicken Loans, and he oversees Amrock, Inc.

"Tim Birkmeier, Chief Revenue Officer of
Mortgage Banking, is primarily responsible for
managing the direct-to-consumer channel of
Quicken Loans, as well as overseeing the large
corporate relationships within the partner
network."

Do you see that?

A. Yeah, I -- I see that, and I think that may have been when the -- when the company was -- earlier on, Bob had been active in the -- the specific partner network of wholesale.

I think, in reality, as we move forward in the time period that you were referencing, so August, September through -- through May, Tim and Bob worked much -- much more closely, as they're working on the broader partner network together.

This, again, I think, is a white paper from a -- maybe a bit before we went public.

- Q. So, in your view, was Bob Walters responsible for managing the partner network during the relevant time period that we're talking about?
- A. As I mentioned, Bob was leaning in more because he had participated more in the wholesale component of it. He had a gentleman -- because Bob was also

direct-to-consumer channel during the relevant time period?

Page 67

A. Yeah, that was before we made Bob the CEO of the mortgage company. Again, I think Bob and Tim worked together. I would assist.

I think -- and just like Bob lean -- was leaning in more toward the wholesale because he had done that longer, Tim was leaning more into the direct-to-consumer because he had done -- done that longer, so he would have, I think, a little bit more involvement than Bob in that case.

- Q. So now we're going to the next page ending 569. And it's the first full paragraph on the page. Do you see where it starts "additionally"?
- A. I do.
 - Q. "Additionally, although Jay Farner seeks input from the leadership team, ultimately, Jay Farner oversees those individuals and has sole decision-making authority on matters of business, operations, and strategy for each legal entity to be taken public. This is consistent with Section 25.4.2.1 of PWC FSPG, which states that while the CEO or COO may receive input from others within the reporting entity, decisions to assess performance and allocate resources are usually made

Page 66

responsible for operations, capital markets, all the kind of fundamental mortgage segments of the business.

He had a gentleman named Austin Niemiec, who was leading wholesale, I think, at this time. But Tim, Austin, and Bob, I think, worked together. There were some differences between wholesale and other partner segments, like realtor and so forth, but there are some similarities too.

But, again, try -- try to think of the company from a -- a marketing perspective, and maybe the -- so I was the CMO. But -- but you're either marketing direct to consumer or you're marketing to a third party that's going to work with the consumer.

And so "partner" encompassed those types of things. And it could be a mortgage broker or it could be a real estate agent or an insurance agent.

And so, I -- I don't know what the direct -- at that time what the direct reporting lines would look like, but -- but those guys had to work together to get efficiencies for the partner network.

Q. Did you consider anyone at the organization, at Rocket, primarily responsible for managing the

Page 68

by one individual.

"For example, if a disagreement about pricing exists between Bob Walters and Tim Birkmeier, the ultimate pricing decision is made by Jay Farner."

Do you see that?

- A. I see that.
- Q. Would you agree that this statement was true during the relevant time period?
- A. No. I would say that the way I approached the business, yes, Tim and Bob reported to me. But I had worked with these individuals for over 20 years. They were as close, if not closer, to the day-to-day operations than I was. And so I relied, I think rightfully so, heavily on them to make these decisions.

And I -- I honestly can't think of a time in -- for this specific example where Bob or Tim came to me -- certainly, there were -- there were times where they were having discussions, and there were times where they didn't see eye to eye. But I can't recall a time where I then stepped in and kind of made an overriding pricing decision.

Again, we had worked together for multiple decades. So, in practice, the way I

Pages 65 to 68

Page 69 Page 71 1 1 operated the business, every -- I trusted -- I reminder is -- and -- and it is Bill's job, and 2 2 trusted people who had lots of experience to do Bill is capital markets, so he's focused on that 3 their job. 3 day-to-day. But I think, in other segments of this 4 4 Q. So just a little bit lower down the page, do you white paper, as it points out, my focus was on the 5 5 see where it says: "The following is a summary of growing of the platform, on the acquiring of the 6 6 key considerations: Analyzed to arrive at client. 7 7 management's determination of CODM"? So I don't want to say that -- I don't 8 8 A. I see that, yes. want to say that a component like gain on sale 9 9 Q. So I'm just going to go through these bullet isn't important, but -- but it -- whether that 10 points. 10 thing moves 15 or 20 basis points, in the -- in the 11 "Jay Farner is solely responsible for 11 grand scheme of the overall value of that client, 12 managing and evaluating the performance of 12 that should not be how you're making your Quicken Loans and Amrock and is authorized to make 13 13 decisions. 14 decisions with respect to the allocation of 14 You should be looking at what is my 15 resources and use of capital." 15 contribution margin on this client, and what's my 16 Was that also true during the relevant 16 lifetime contribution on this client. 17 17 time period? So for me to get embroiled in, like, a 18 18 A. Again, I know we're kind of looking at this, and -day-to-day discussion over 15 or 20 basis -- just 19 and kind of the way you're reading it is -- is as 19 that -- I did not view that as the proper use of my 20 if this is like an official document. The way I'm 20 21 reading this is is this is a white paper someone 21 Q. So what about the next bullet point? 22 did, so I don't know what the end result was of 22 "Jay Farner is involved with roadmaps 23 23 and allocation decisions for product innovation?" this. 24 But once we went public, we had a board. 24 Was that true during the relevant time 25 And so, certainly, I would make many decisions. My 25 period? Page 70 Page 72 1 leaders would make many decisions. If I felt it 1 A. In -- in some cases, depending on the product type. 2 2 was appropriate, we -- at one point in time in my In other cases, I delegated those products to the 3 3 career, and I can't recall the exact month, but we areas of the business that were using them, and 4 made an acquisition of a company, which would, of 4 they made the decisions. 5 5 course, I think, have been the use of capital. Q. So which product types were you involved with? 6 6 But I went to the board and made sure A. I participated with Tim and Heather Lovier in the 7 7 that they approved of that. So that's how, in sales force technology, because I had experience 8 practice, things worked. 8 operating the call center for a long period of 9 Q. So what about the second bullet point? 9 10 10 "Jay Farner sets guidelines and I would work -- I think there's another 11 philosophies on pricing for both direct to consumer 11 segment of this that breaks down the different 12 and partner network channels. Additionally, he 12 businesses. But a lot of our technology resources 13 sets the budgets, and if there are disagreements 13 had been -- were -- were stationed in Rocket 14 between Tim and Bob on pricing, Jay has the 14 Central, because it's a central services provider. 15 15 ultimate decision-making authority." So think about it, like a mortgage or 16 16 Was that true during the relevant real estate would come and say, like, We want to 17 17 build an app, we want to build a website, and the period?

> (sic) that -- is this a viable product, would this help us grow our client base, will this improve client experience. So a website would be another one that would have some involvement with.

So I would be involved in decisioning

Q. So what about the next bullet point? "Jay Farner evaluates and makes

team leading that would report to me.

Pages 69 to 72

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A. No. As I mentioned before, capital markets, Bill

guidelines and philosophies. And they would talk

to marketing and banking to get their input. But I

markets and, you know, make the decision on what

Maybe a caveat to that or -- or a

would say I trusted Bill Banfield to understand

Banfield, were responsible for setting the

was appropriate for pricing.

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Page 73

decisions regarding the financial information presented to him by the segment managers, finance team, and other areas of the organization."

Was that true during the relevant time

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- A. I guess I would have to understand better. When it says "makes decisions," are we talking about me deciding what financial materials are produced, or are we talking about me using the financial information to then, like, set a budget? Or I'm a little -- I'm not sure how to interpret that.
- Q. Did you decide what financial materials would be produced in evaluating Rocket's business during the relevant period?
- A. Sparingly. We empowered much of the organization. This was an internaldebate that we had, should we centralize some of these functions, should we continue to let them be in each area for the -- for most of the time and during the period we allowed them to be decentralized.

And -- and going back to the conversation we had about key performance indicators, so each area of the business had their own analytics groups, and they could decide measurements that they thought were important to Page 75

Page 76

Or I'm looking at the long term. Are we growing client accounts, are we engaging clients, are we building that lifetime value flywheel, are we executing on the technology strategies, you know, what's the status of building out the new Rocket Homes website that will allow us to engage clients more.

So, really, those two focuses.

Immediate, just to make sure if I need to reach out to Tim, or someone saying, hey, are you paying attention to this, or long term -- I was -- I was thinking about this today as I drove

General Motors has been in business for, like, 140 years now. So I used to tell the story all the time, I mean, the reason the companies don't do well isn't because of how they performed last guarter or the next guarter. It's because they don't have a thoughtful strategy to grow in the next five years, ten years, et cetera.

So it was kind of those two types of -of things that I was thinking about or looking at.

Q. So you testified that the ten-year Treasury is going -- sorry. Strike that. Let me start over. You testified, "I wake up at whatever

Page 74

1 time in the morning. The minute the market is 2

open, I'm watching to see what the ten-year Treasury is going to do. That's about the most," I believe you testified, important review indicator to what might be happening in the capital markets.

Why is that?

A. Well, because mortgage-backed securities typically trade close to the ten-year Treasury bill, and so if it's moving -- volatility is a good thing.

As I've said before, interest rates will tick up, interest rates will tick down. The movement of the direction isn't as important as the movement, because the movement creates marketing opportunities, the movement gives a reason for a mortgage banker to call a client and have a discussion.

And so, much like the rest of the world, I'm looking to see what's going to happen, because that movement will usually translate to some sort of a movement in the -- in the mortgage interest

- Q. You've also mentioned Leadflow as being important. What is Leadflow?
- A. Well, in a broad sense, it's the number of clients that -- that the direct-to-consumer mortgage

them. I -- I may not view that as important to me.

So I would say, for the most part, people were able to use their resources and create the reports that they felt were relevant to them.

- Q. What reports did you feel were relevant to you?
- A. I really looked at the world in -- in two ways. Maybe because of my background as a mortgage banker and the -- and the chief marketing officer, there is what I would consider maybe the immediate information by the day, by the hour.

So it's 11:00 a.m. and, you know, I'm watching -- typically, my day-to-day practice, I wake up at whatever time in the morning. The minute the markets open, and I'm watching to see what the ten-year Treasury is going to do, because that's going -- that's about the most relevant indicator to try to figure out what might be happening in capital markets.

Then I might look at Leadflow. Was there -- was there Leadflow coming in, not coming in. And then, you know, do we have -- are we staffed or do -- you know, are we making phone calls, et cetera. So that's, like, the day-to-day. Because there's only a certain amount of business days in a year. You can't blow them.

Pages 73 to 76

bankers have the opportunity to speak with.

1 meetings with them, et cetera.

Q. So are there specific reports that were important to you to assess the short-term and long-term metrics of the business?

A. Certainly, there was data available. By that point in time, most of the short-term stuff was available on your phone. It's realtime, so if I was thinking about something, I would just pull it up and look at, like I told you before, total Leadflow by channel or -- and when I say "channel" in that perspective, I'm talking marketing channel, so LowerMyBills versus LendingTree versus our organic search versus paid, et cetera.

Or as I touched on before, our product strategy team would have reports on how the build was going for sales -- the next implementation of sales force.

That's important because there's certain things in the business I can control or have more control over, that's probably a better term, and things I can't. I don't know where interest rates are going. No one does. So spending a lot of time thinking about that is not going to be beneficial.

I can determine if we build out the next component to sales force that studies or detects a

- Q. And you testified, by that point in time, most of the short term stuff was available on your phone realtime. What did you mean by that?
- A. We had a -- a reporting system called BiGG. Again, the name may have changed now. In my -- in my time frame, I believe we called it BiGG.

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Page 80

And it was an online portal where you can select to -- I want to look at, as -- as I said before, show me all the leads that had come through on paid search, and what was -- you know, have we called them. So we -- it allows you to kind of customize or filter things.

Q. So I just want to ask you to turn to the Bates ending in 573 in the document.

My question is going to be about the chart in the middle of the page that says "Information received by CODM."

Do you see that?

20 A. I do.

- Q. Did you receive a monthly report that had all ten operating segments in it?
- A. Yeah. Again, this document, I think, is pre-IPO. I know that I was given some report, maybe two. I couldn't say if they were, you know, monthly or

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motion in people's words.

And if I can build that out and determine that today 2,000 of our clients -- let's say we talked to 50,000 -- 2,000 of those clients had anxiety in their voice, and now we can follow back up with them and make them feel better or answer their question, and I can get conversion up 1 percentage point, it dwarfs any other revenue opportunity at the organization not just at that moment, but in the lifetime.

And so that's why focusing on these longer-term strategies is so critical, because it's the real driver, consistent, controllable driver of the business.

- Q. I guess my question is a little bit different. I just want to know if there were specific reports by name that were important for you to look at?
- A. Yeah. It -- it's been a few years, so I couldn't tell you the name. But I'm trying to describe the report --
- Q. Mm-hmm.
- A. -- which are those minute-by-minute or day-by-day broad production reports that were in -- online or -- or these larger kinds of product strategy reports that I would look at before I went to

- by -- I didn't really spend a lot of time reviewing them, so I couldn't tell you the frequency.
- Q. What about weekly reports? Did you receive weekly reports on the direct-to-consumer and partner network segments of the business?
- A. I know that I did receive a report weekly that, from time to time, I would ask my -- I would go to my assistant, and if there was something, I guess, by time or so forth, I -- I might glance at them.

It may -- the reason I'm pausing is I'm trying to think what was in it, if it was direct consumer, partner, or -- or broader.

But I think, more importantly, because I was engaging in the things I thought were important daily, this wasn't as relevant to me.

Q. So you mentioned BiGG as a repository of data that you could access from your phone.

Did you receive reports from the BiGG repository?

A. From time to time, someone may have generated something that they wanted to show me, but for the most part, that's a -- that's a -- more like a -- you engage with the system, right.

I mean, you kind of even -- I just happened to glance down here, and it says, "Jay

Pages 77 to 80

Page 81 Page 83 1 1 analysts, Fannie, Freddie, FHA, and use those to does look at a certain amount of nonfinancial 2 2 information, website views, click-through reports." come up with different scenarios, mostly, I would 3 I think that's what they're kind of 3 think from an expense perspective. 4 4 getting to. And a lot of that was, I would go just But the way I viewed that would be --5 kind of seek that out. 5 and I think this is why when you look at how we 6 6 You know, look, I can't -- I still do it reported our numbers once we were public, you can 7 7 today. I'll see an ad for some company, I think talk about the quarter you have just closed out, 8 8 it's interesting. I go, oh, my gosh. Okay. I and because usually the earnings calls were, you wonder if we're doing something like that. I visit 9 9 know, a few months into the next quarter, you could 10 the website, I see if we have it. I then would 10 give some guidance around that one guarter moving 11 11 generate a report to look at it. forward. But that's about where it stops from a --12 Exam- -- another example of that would 12 really using information to think about the future. 13 13 be, hey, I know marketing is spending X amount of Because now after that, you've got to 14 dollars on Cyber Monday. I wonder if we were sharp 14 rely on the execution of your strategies to drive the business long term. And what will happen in 15 enough to make sure that we had the full mortgage 15 16 banking team in at that same time. 16 the middle -- I don't want to say it's irrelevant, 17 17 I would then go and look at, you know, but you -- I think it's dangerous to get hung up on 18 18 what our acceptance of calls were, just -- but a running the business that way. 19 lot of that's kind of self-driven for -- for BiGG, 19 Q. Are you familiar with The Compass report at Rocket? 20 to answer your question. 20 A. I've heard of the report before, yes. 21 Q. Did BiGG track actual information coming in, or did 21 Q. What was that report meant to track? 22 it involve projecting information for either the 22 A. You know, probably, without looking at it, I 23 23 near term or the long term? couldn't give you specifics. But I think it was a 24 24 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Hold on. Objection, report perhaps created by Brian Brown or the 25 form. 25 accounting team. And I think it had in it company Page 82 Page 84 1 You can answer. 1 performance -- maybe the last quarter or, from time 2 2 A. Okay. You probably could sense this already, but to time, maybe that previous year-to-date 3 in this -- all businesses, I think, are 3 performance, those sorts of things. 4 challenging. 4 Q. Did you receive The Compass reports during the 5 5 relevant time period? In this business, it is incredibly 6 challenging to do projections for the future, 6 A. I think they were sent to me, yes. 7 7 because you have so little control over the Q. Did you review The Compass reports during the 8 economy, which is what's driving housing markets, 8 relevant time period? 9 9 A. Not really, no. 10 10 So BiGG was not -- BiGG was not designed Q. Why not? 11 to look forward, because now you're just throwing 11 A. Well, we kind of touched on this, but a lot of 12 in just random variables, or maybe you are 12 the -- those reports, as I recall, were either kind 13 embedding the Mortgage Bankers Association forecast 13 of information I already would know. I'm looking 14 or Fannie or whatnot. 14 at information day to day. I have a pretty good 15 15 understanding of how the business is operating. BiGG was really designed to look 16 backwards and say, hey, what's the performance of 16 And they didn't involve a lot of long-term data 17 the business been, or maybe you can study that and 17 about execution of strategies. 18 say, okay, if I don't like how that performance is, 18 So the rest was kind of reporting news 19 what strategy could I now build for the future. 19 that I could gain insight from, either by what I 20 20 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: had already looked at or talking to my leaders.

Q. So you testified: "A lot of those reports, as I

would know. I'm looking at the information

recall, were either kind of information I already

So did The Compass report embed within

Q. Did you have any internal reports that were meant

to look forward or forecast metrics at Rocket?

A. I would say that there were areas of our business

that would take external forecasts in particular,

again, Mortgage Bankers Association, other banking

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day to day."

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	Page 85		Page 87
1	the report information that you were looking at day	1	break now, and then if you're have another long
2	to day?	2	segment
3	A. There may have been some. Again, without you	3	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Yeah.
4	showing me the I haven't worked there in quite	4	ATTORNEY SCOTT: just do it then and
5	some time. I probably should look at the report,	5	try and go all the way up to lunch.
6	so I actually know what you're what you're	6	VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Off the record,
7	asking me.	7	11:27.
8	Q. Did you attend any meetings associated with	8	(Off the record at 11:27 a.m.)
9	reviewing The Compass report?	9	(Back on the record at 11:44 a.m.)
10	ATTORNEY SCOTT: Object hold on a	10	VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Back on the record at
11	second. Objection, form.	11	11:44. It's File 2.
12	You can answer.	12	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Derick, could you
13	A. Not on a regular basis. I couldn't say that there	13	introduce Tab 81 as Farner Exhibit 2.
14	wasn't a time where someone may have had it or	14	MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION:
15	referenced it. But my recollection is that it was	15	DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 2
16	sent to me electronically. Just if you wanted to	16	Cover Email and Attachment
17	review it, you could do it on on your time.	17	11:44 a.m.
18	BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:	18	BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
19	Q. Did you attend any meetings associated with	19	Q. So, Mr. Farner, you've been handed Farner
20	reviewing The Compass report?	20	Exhibit 2, which is a cover email with an
21	ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form,	21	attachment.
22	lacks a factual predicate.	22	Do you see do you see your name
23	You can answer.	23	listed on the "to sign" on the first page of the
24	A. Okay. Now you've got me a little con confused.	24	email?
25	Isn't that what you just asked me?	25	A. I do.
	Page 86		Page 88
1	BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:	1	Q. And you received those weekly Compass reports on
2	Q. Yes. And I believe your response was not on a	2	February 16th, 2021, correct?
3	regular basis.	3	A. Yeah, that's the date here on the on the email.
4	So my question is: Did you attend any	4	Q. So I'm just going to go over to the attachment now.
5	meetings associated with reviewing The Compass	5	VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Excuse me. Do you
6	reports?	6	have your mic on?
7	A. Right. And as I as I responded, I can't recall	7	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: No.
8	a meeting that I attended that was specific to	8	VIDEO TECHNICIAN: I could hear you
9	reviewing The Compass report. I'm not saying that	9	fine, but
10	I wasn't in a meeting where someone may have had it	10	BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
11	and used it to reference a particular piece of data	11	Q. Is this Compass report in the form of The Compass
12	they wanted, but my my remembering is that The	12	report that you received every week?
13	they wanted, but my femembering is that me	12	report that you received every week:
14	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not	13	A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time
15	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not	13	A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time
	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's	13 14	A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe
15	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's how I recall it.	13 14 15	A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't be in the form, but
15 16	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's how I recall it. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So I'm about to	13 14 15 16	 A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't be in the form, but Q. Was The Compass report prepared in the ordinary
15 16 17	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's how I recall it. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So I'm about to introduce a Compass report. I don't know if you	13 14 15 16 17	 A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't be in the form, but Q. Was The Compass report prepared in the ordinary course of Rocket's business?
15 16 17 18	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's how I recall it. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So I'm about to introduce a Compass report. I don't know if you guys want to take a break or not. But I have a	13 14 15 16 17 18	 A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't be in the form, but Q. Was The Compass report prepared in the ordinary course of Rocket's business? A. Well, over over my career there, this was not a
15 16 17 18 19	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's how I recall it. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So I'm about to introduce a Compass report. I don't know if you guys want to take a break or not. But I have a long line of questioning that is going to be	13 14 15 16 17 18 19	 A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't be in the form, but Q. Was The Compass report prepared in the ordinary course of Rocket's business? A. Well, over over my career there, this was not a report we used. Perhaps based on the other form
15 16 17 18 19 20	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's how I recall it. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So I'm about to introduce a Compass report. I don't know if you guys want to take a break or not. But I have a long line of questioning that is going to be associated with that. It's up to you.	13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	 A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't be in the form, but Q. Was The Compass report prepared in the ordinary course of Rocket's business? A. Well, over over my career there, this was not a report we used. Perhaps based on the other form you showed me, it came into existence around the
15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's how I recall it. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So I'm about to introduce a Compass report. I don't know if you guys want to take a break or not. But I have a long line of questioning that is going to be associated with that. It's up to you. THE WITNESS: Yeah. What are you	13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	 A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't be in the form, but Q. Was The Compass report prepared in the ordinary course of Rocket's business? A. Well, over over my career there, this was not a report we used. Perhaps based on the other form you showed me, it came into existence around the time that we went public.
15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Compass reports were sent to me digitally, not structured in a meeting. Again, that's that's how I recall it. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So I'm about to introduce a Compass report. I don't know if you guys want to take a break or not. But I have a long line of questioning that is going to be associated with that. It's up to you. THE WITNESS: Yeah. What are you thinking about lunch? What time are you I know	13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	 A. As I had said before, I didn't spend a lot of time looking at it. So I I have no reason to believe that it wouldn't be in the form, but Q. Was The Compass report prepared in the ordinary course of Rocket's business? A. Well, over over my career there, this was not a report we used. Perhaps based on the other form you showed me, it came into existence around the time that we went public. And I don't know if it's still in

Q. Do you know why The Compass report came into

like 1:00 or so for lunch. Let's take a quick

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- 1 existence around the time you went public?
- 2 A. No, I can't say for certain.
- Q. So I'm going to ask you to turn to the Bates ending in 112.
- A. Okay. I think I'm -- so it's "February 16th, 2021QL and Amrock" on the top?
- 7 Q. Yes.
- 8 A. Okay.

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- 9 Q. Do you see where it says on the top left corner: 10 "FCST 7 - 2.12.21"?
- 11 A. Yeah, I'm not sure what that means, but I -- I do 12 see those letters, yes.
 - Q. Does that mean Forecast 7?
- 14 A. Like I said, I've never seen that before until you pointed it out, so...
 - Q. Does the company prepare weekly forecasts to track its business?
 - A. There may be people who are putting -- apparently this is an Enzo Barretta -- people putting information together, as I had referenced before. The relevant data for us to operate the business is really looking at what we have achieved and maybe looking 30 days out or so because some of that information is -- is knowable.
- 25 Outside of that, having an understanding

volume, rate locks. I see revenue and that's blank. Jeez, somewhere in here there must be information that would show net income.

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And you would look at it and say, okay, in these scenarios, am I okay spending that marketing budget, am I okay doing that Super Bowl ad for \$25 million, am I okay hiring another 1,000 mortgage bankers? So to ensure that you can continue to fund the strategies that you're -- you're going to be doing moving forward.

- Q. Would you look at net income in this report?
- A. Like I said, I -- I don't really recall using this report. But I have looked at net income before.
 - Q. So let's just go through some of the metrics in this report, starting at line 3 with "net rate locks."

Do you see that?

- 18 A. Well, on -- on mine, it says: "Gross rate locks"19 for 3. I may be looking at different --
- Q. So I just want to make sure we're on the same page.We are on the page ending 114.
- 22 A. Oh, I'm sorry. I was on 112.
- 23 Q. Oh, yeah.
- 24 A. Okay.
- 25 Q. Wait. Let me make sure. Give me one second.

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of kind of the broader future really would be for a few reasons -- because it's incredibly hard to predict. I can't predict what is going to happen in the mortgage market, in the interest rate market, in the housing market. No one can.

So the thing you're thinking about is someone has a strategy, we're going to spend \$15 million with sales force. Okay. Can we afford that, even if things fluctuate a bit?

I remember having a conversation with somebody over -- Doug Patton (phonetic) over at JPMorgan Chase many years ago after the Great Recession. And he said: Look, the accountants have to put together different scenarios -- this was in terms of capital, I think, that the bank held -- just to make sure that any scenario, you can still execute your strategy. It's not a forecast of what you think is going to happen. It's more an understanding of you can continue to move forward with what you want to do, regardless of possible changes that you can't predict.

And so things like this could be helpful because you can look and see, okay, where are we going to be with -- and I'm trying to search here to see where that might be on this page. I see

A. Okay.

2 Q. I think you should be on 112.

All right. Yeah, let's go back to 112.

4 A. Okay

- Q. So starting with "gross rate locks," what does thatmean?
 - A. It says here it's a "Volume metrics include correspondent and HELOC at draw amount, and excludes ORM."

I'm going to suppose, because there's a -- the line below that says "net," that gross is maybe at the time the client locks the loan, and net is the difference between who locks and who actually sends their application back.

- Q. Did the BiGG database that we talked about earlier track gross rate locks?
- A. I couldn't -- I couldn't say. It -- it was not a report I used. I can't speak to all the data that it might -- might house.
 - Q. What about net rate locks? Did the BiGG database track net rate locks?
- A. Hmm. That's a good question. So I'm trying to think about -- I would look at clients or loans-originated registrations.

And a registration is similar to a, you

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se II.	21-cv-11528-1LL-APP ECF No. 190-24, 138	Pagei	D.30179 Filed 07/16/24 Page 25 0
	Page 93		Page 95
1	know, net rate lock, but not the exact same. It	1	Q. Do you have an understanding as to whether, during
2	it may have tracked it. I used a slightly	2	the relevant time frame, the BiGG database tracked
3	different again, I'm more interested in the	3	the full business of Rocket?
4	number of clients we're acquiring than the than	4	A. I don't believe every business we had was in BiGG
5	the loan volume we're we're getting.	5	at that time. Auto may not have you know,
6	Q. What what does loans-originated registrations	6	again, I don't want to speculate, but I don't
7	mean?	7	recall thinking every single business was in there.
8	A. Is that on	8	Sometimes Victor You, our business
9	Q. No. That's what you just said	9	leader, might give me some reports they had
10	A. Oh.	10	created, if it was a start-up or a smaller
11	Q you track in BiGG.	11	business.
12	A. Oh. So we talked about that on, like, a daily	12	Q. Who is Victor You?
13	basis or a weekly basis or whatever it might be.	13	A. He he ran Rocket Auto.
14	It's the number of loans that a banker or a team of	14	Q. So I'm just going to go to line 10.
15	bankers, however, you want to slice and dice it,	15	Do you see where it says, "Folder
16	wrote in that day.	16	volume"?
17	Q. Was BiGG able to look retrospectively at metrics to	17	A. I do.
18	do comparisons? In other words, could it do a	18	Q. Can you tell me what your understanding of folder
19	week-over-week comparison?	19	volume is?
20	A. It could.	20	A. Well, in this case, I'm trying to figure out what
21	Q. And what about a month-over-month comparison?	21	exactly is in this metric in terms of the different
22	A. It could.	22	channels we talked about.
23	Q. And what about a quarter-over-quarter comparison?	23	But, in general, if you're looking at
24	A. I my recollection is that you could put in a	24	line, you said, 10?
25	date range when you're going to create the report,	25	Q. Yes.
	Page 94		Page 96
1	and you could look backwards to see things.	1	A. Those would be the loans that we had received back
2	O What about a year-over-year comparison? Was BiGG	2	that the client had sent the information so that we

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Q. What about a year-over-year comparison? Was BiGG 3 able --4 A. Same --5 Q. -- to do that? 6 A. -- same concept, that you were able to put in the 7 date range of -- of it. I think some of that would 8 depend on -- as you probably can imagine, some data is clean, some data is not clean, and -- and so I 9 10 couldn't say in every sit- -- I couldn't tell you 11 in every situation how far back it could go. 12 Q. Do you know if the data that's located in this 13 Compass report was pulled from the BiGG database? 14 A. I don't know. 15 Q. Do you know who would know that? A. All I could guess is that the pre- -- preparer 16 17 might know. 18 Q. And did the BiGG database track metrics for the 19 whole business, or was it just home loans?

A. That would be a question dependent on the time

frame. The goal was to continue to use analysts

and spreadsheets and those sorts of things. But

businesses would be online or not online. I -- so

depending on what month it was, different

I guess it depends. Right.

that the client had sent the information so that we could underwrite it.

And you can see here, obviously, January -- because this is February 16th, and I don't know where he's getting his data. Maybe it's a week behind. Who knows. You know, so he has the actuals for January. He may have some of the information, a week or two, for February.

And then, from there, we don't -- we wouldn't have any data around this. So I don't know if he's looking at the MBA and taking our market-share percentage, or I don't know what -where he -- he's coming with these numbers after that point.

- Q. So you don't have an understanding of what he based the February '21 forecast on?
- A. Like I said, he would -- he would have, I think, some data from the first week or -- or maybe two.

But at least the way we would look at it, we would take Fannie's forecasts, MBA forecasts. They were all over the board, and so, eventually, you say to yourself, no one can predict what's going on here, so let's not worry about it. Let's worry about actually just doing our job and

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1 executing on the strategies we have at this 2 company. 3 If I were Enzo, all I could surmise is 4 that he would go out to some sort of public, you 5 know, record like that and try to, you know, 6 determine what our market share would be. 7 Q. Do you see on line 14 where it says, "Closed 8 volume"? 9 A. I do. 10 Q. Can you tell me what that means? 11

A. Same situation here. I -- I don't know right here if this is for direct or both direct and TPO. I'm seeing TPO down below, so maybe it's both areas.

But it's -- a closed volume, in general, is the -- is the loan volume that we have closed that month.

So that's the client went to the signing and signed their paperwork, and we gave them their money or refin- -- you know, paid off their loan or whatever the case is.

And, again, it's got the actuals for January, which should be pretty accurate. And then it's got forecast for the rest. And I -- I can't tell you how he would have come up with that.

Q. I just want to go back to No. 10 on folder volume.

At times, I can recall doing that. Would be if I saw either an anomaly, and then you'd go back and say, well, oh, that was when there was a holiday, you know, some day, Columbus Day fell on that day and --

Or if I was trying to compare a marketing initiative. So we tried one thing, rolled it out, how did it work, and then we adjusted that marketing initiative. Now let me go -- so that last marketing initiative was Thursday of last month, the new one is this Thursday, how might those two compare from a performance perspective.

Q. Circling back to No. 4, net rate locks.

Is net rate locks something that you would look at in the BiGG database?

A. I think we touched on this. I don't know if net rate lock -- I'm not saying it's not in there. I can't recall if there was a report that even had that.

 $\ensuremath{\mathrm{I}}$ -- $\ensuremath{\mathrm{I}}$ would look at registration in the comparison, because the vast majority of people who wrote -- wrote a loan locked their loan, so I kind of thought about it that way.

Q. So do you see line 14, closed volume?

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Is folder volume something the BiGG
 database would have tracked?
 A. I believe, in BiGG, you could pull up by team or

- A. I believe, in BiGG, you could pull up by team or banker that day or that week what certain people had done with folders.
- Q. Is folder volume something that you looked at in the BiGG database?
- A. I did.

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- Q. And did you look at folder volume as a comparison week over week?
- A. I looked more at folder volume -- more at folder units. You could -- I'm thinking of a direct competitor. You could -- you could be increasing your folder volume and think, wow, that's great.

But instead of 30 percent, now 50 percent of your loan volume is coming from the state of California. Loan balances have doubled. You're actually bringing in fewer clients. And in the long run, that's going to hurt your business. You're not growing, you're shrinking.

So, for me, I probably spent more time looking at the unit number to determine were we doing more units, was the marketing dollar working, were we acquiring more clients.

I could do a comparison week over week.

- A. Yes.
- Q. What is closed volume?
- A. Again, I think closed volume is the total loan balances we closed in January added together. And then, in February, it's whatever data we have whenever he prepared this that was available, plus some sort of a guesstimate.

And then, of course, same -- same -- same deal, some sort of a guesstimate moving forward that I don't know how you predict that.

- Q. And is closed volume something that the BiGG database tracked?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And is closed volume something that you tracked on the BiGG database?
- A. Yes, there were times that I would look at closed volume. Mostly, I would think as comparison to the originations or marketing programs that we had done, because the first step, of course, is the loan application, but the last step is the closed volume.

And so you're trying to look and just, you know, understand what had happened in that marketing campaign.

Q. Do you see line 20, where it says, "Average closed

Page 101 Page 103 loan amount"? 1 1 clients. 2 2 A. I do. Anyway, those types of activities were 3 Q. What is that? 3 things that I had to do more of, and so I probably 4 A. Without having the -- these calculations this 4 spent a little less time in BiGG than I had in the 5 person used, my assumption will be he or she has 5 past. 6 6 taken the loan volume number and the total number Q. Would you say that there are, for example, top-five 7 7 of units, which I believe -- well, that's funded, metrics you would look at in BiGG when you did the 8 8 so that'll be a different number, probably. revenue materials in BiGG? 9 9 But you can see in line 23, it says A. It may vary a bit, based on the day, but the -- you 10 121,000, and they probably divided it to get the 10 know, one thing I looked at a lot was Leadflow, the 11 number of leads. 11 average loan -- loan balance. Again, probably not 12 the best way to look at things, because you're 12 I looked at the number of phone calls 13 that we would make, because that's an important 13 combining a lot of different stuff together. 14 14 part of getting in touch with the client. But that 121 number is a really -- you 15 know, a valuable number, because that's reflecting 15 There were conversion rates in BiGG so, 16 16 the number of clients you have now brought into you know, I'd want to see how a marketing campaign 17 or a certain banker group was converting those 17 the -- the ecosystem. 18 18 Q. Is the average closed loan amount something that leads. 19 the BiGG database tracked? 19 And we talked about daily registrations, 20 A. Maybe a pause on the word "tracked." My 20 how many -- based on that, how many loans did we 21 understanding of it is it's a -- it's a database. 21 write in that day. 22 And there's a filter on top that you can use to 22 I mean, those -- those are the type 23 23 select the report that you would like. of things I would say I spent most of my time 24 24 So I believe that there was a category looking at. 25 for average closed loan amount that you could 25 Q. Going back to The Compass report. At line 14 we Page 102 Page 104 1 select. 1 talked about closed volume. Do you see below that 2 2 But when you say "track," like, it's where it says "Refinance" and then below that where 3 3 there. It's a matter of whether you are choosing it says "Purchase" and then below that where it 4 to use it or -- or not use it. 4 5 A. Try- -- trying not to get distracted here with the 5 I'm not sure "tracked" is the right 6 6 word. "Kept" or "repository" perhaps. spelling. 7 7 Q. You testified earlier, I believe, that you would Yeah, I see that. I'm noticing because 8 check the BiGG database. Would you do that every 8 this is coming off of December and January, which, 9 9 of course, the winter months there's not a lot of 10 10 A. I would do it on a regular basis. I would say that purchase activity because it's -- you know, I'm 11 11 as we went public and there were other noticing that the refinance activity is pretty 12 responsibilities or, you know, the -- the other 12 substantial right here. But then I realized the --13 13 things that come added with a public company -- I the date range. 14 know one of the -- one of the things maybe we will 14 Q. Did the BiGG database keep information on closed 15 15 volume broken down by refinance, purchase, and get to are some of the alleged misstatements that I 16 16 made. I had to spend more time out doing 17 17 A. Yes, I believe you were able to look at the data by conferences or those sorts of things to educate 18 18 those segments. the -- the analysts and investors on why our 19 company was different from. 19 Q. Did you look at the data by those segments in the 20 20 BiGG database? You know, again, I saw the few words 21 that were taken out of context. But if you look at 21 A. Yes, from time to time, I probably looked at the 22 22 my full statement, you'll see I clearly talk about difference between purchase and refinance, mm-hmm. 23 23 rates ticking up and down. And I clearly discuss Q. Can you look at line 26 where it says: "Retail 24 the cycles. I talk about the channels. I discuss 24 production margin." 25 25 our marketing abilities and the long-term value of Do you see that?

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retail closed volume?

backwards in time.

BiGG database?

agent, the insurance provider.

party channel being the broker, the real estate

A. Did the BiGG database -- yes. I believe in the

perspective or a third party perspective going

Q. And did you look at the retail closed volume on the

A. I would say that from time to time, I would look at

the units and perhaps the volume closed in the

Q. And would you, like, look at the Rocket Pro TPO

to look at the closed units from a retail

Q. And did the BiGG database keep information on the

BiGG database, you could select whether you wanted

A. I do. 1

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- 2 O. What is that?
- 3 A. I believe that is the -- well, I'm going to be 4 cautious here. I can't say the exact components 5 that go into that. But roughly in January, for 6 example, when we closed a retail loan, that was the percentage we were earning -- or I should say, we 8 believed we would earn.

Again, you had to close the loan, fund the loan, make salable, and then who knows what happens to the mortgage servicing rights of it later in life. But that -- that's what was thought we had earned at that point in time.

- Q. Is retail production margin something that the BiGG database kept information on?
- 16 A. I -- I don't know. I don't ever recall looking at 17 it in there.
 - Q. Do you see line 30 where it says: "QL Rate Lock GOS Margin"?
- 20 A. I do.
- 21 Q. What is that?
- 22 A. Well, I think it's a combination -- and, again, 23 January should be accurate because if he's pulling 24 this right, we have the information in January. A 25 combination of the retail and the third party
- 16 closed volume on the BiGG database? 17 A. I would say from time to time, I would also look at
- 18 the historic information of Rocket TPO closed units 19 and volume.
 - Q. If you look at the other metrics on this page, are there any other metrics on this page that you would look at on the BiGG database?
 - A. There are a lot of metrics on this page. They're categorized in certain terms. The BiGG database may have used different terms. We've touched on

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margin that has been averaged out.

Once you get past February, then I wouldn't pay attention to that because I don't know how he could possibly know what's going to happen in the future.

- Q. Is the QL Rate Lock GOS Margin something that the BiGG database kept information on?
- A. Again, much like the retail, I don't know. I don't recall ever seeing it there.
- Q. Did you look at the gain-on-sale margin in the BiGG
- A. Like I said, I don't recall ever seeing it there.
 - Q. Just going back to line 18, where it says "Retail Closed Volume." What is that?
- A. Well, we had discussed closed volume. And then here it is showing, I believe, a breakdown. Again, I'm looking at January, which is the only month that would have accurate information. Between what came through the retail channel and what -- oh, boy, the line below it is the third party -- what came through the third party channel.
 - Q. When you say "what came through," what do you mean?
- 23 A. The loan was originated through that -- that 24 channel. So the direct-to-consumer channel, Rocket 25 marketing directly to -- to consumers; the third

- quite a few. I, at this time, am not able to think of anything else. But it was a long time ago, and there could be something in a different term or a different word or something of that nature that I happen to look at. Nothing's standing out to me at this moment.
 - Q. Did you, yourself, run reports on BiGG, or did someone do it for you?
 - A. If I was the one thinking about information, I would run the report. I had been using this database for a long period of time. And it started as simply a mortgage banking database, so I was familiar with it.

There may have been occasions where someone else had gone into BiGG, had the same -- a curiosity or level of interest and pulled their own report and showed me that report.

Q. Can you recall that happening during the relevant time frame?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Object -- sorry. Object to form.

You can answer.

A. Again, going back to your relevant time frame of, like, August of 2020 to May of 2021? BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

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Q. Yes.
 A. I can't recall a specific time. I would assume
 that over a eight- or ninth-period, someone had
 generated a production report in BiGG and shown it
 or shared it with me.

Q. And who would have generated a production report during that time frame to show you?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'm sorry. Objection, form.

You can answer.

A. BiGG is available to hundreds, if not thousands of people. A sales director could have pulled it to say, Hey, you're about to walk into a meeting to talk to my team, and here's a report of how they performed the last week so you know the names and how they're doing. That's one example. Right. But that -- it -- I couldn't give you -- there's a lot of people.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. Could you turn to the Bates ending 128?

Do you see where it says, "2021 RKT

Internal Forecast Versus Annual Operating Plan"?

23 A. I see that, yes.

Q. What is the annual operating plan?

25 A. I don't know. I don't ever recall having a

practice was to set the key objectives for the organization, determine the strategies that would have to be executed on to achieve those objectives, which would result in number of clients acquired, cost to acquire, et cetera.

And then other individuals, such as people in accounting, et cetera, would probably take those objectives and try to hypothesize what might occur.

As I mentioned before, for me, the concept would be, are we able to achieve or fund the strategies that we're implementing, a full well knowing in this business after many, many years -- and we've had this happen multiple times -- you set one strategy early in the year and you have to pivot and completely change that strategy as you get into the year, because you don't -- you cannot rely on a guesstimate of what might occur as the year goes on.

It could be that something happens, like it happened in early 2020 and you've got to send all of your team members home in two days and buy lots of equipment and completely change how you're operating your business.

It could be that the Fed makes a mistake

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specific title of -- of that used on a regular basis.

Q. What does this report show to you?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form.

A. In this report shows me an individual -- and it looks like probably using some of the data that we looked at in the previous pages -- coming up with a Q1 forecast, as they're calling it, which, because this was generated on February 16th, and as we've talked about multiple times, might be slightly accurate. It's got about half of the data baked.

And then, creating another column where they're now looking at the full year of 2021, which, as I've said to you before, I don't know how they would come up with that number because it's, in this case, ten months of data in an incredibly volatile business. So perhaps they used external forecasts, market share. I don't know. But it's showing those two forms of information, according to this individual.

21 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. Did you ever work on an annual financial plan forthe company?
 - A. I would have worked on an annual plan for the company. As I had talked with -- about before, the

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in increasing interest rates and generates a ton of inflation that no one has predicted, and now you've got to pivot your business differently to focus on different products. Those things are going to happen over and over and over again, and no one can predict those things.

So the focus of that annual plan that you referenced would be, and I said this before, on the things that we can control, the strategies that we can control. That, to me, is the most important thing, and that's where I spent my time.

- Q. Were you involved in setting financial targets on a quarterly basis?
- A. I suppose I -- I'll need you to better define "financial targets."
- Q. Were you involved in setting a goal for gain-on-sale margin on a quarterly basis?
- A. As we talked about before, a gain-on-sale margin is something that you really cannot predict more than -- you know, it's hard to predict at all. But setting a goal more than a few weeks out would be challenging. So I was involved in discussing gain-on-sale margin with finance, accounting, Bob Walters and Bill Banfield in particular.

When it came to giving guidance -- when

view?

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I say "guidance," guidance in our quarterly earnings -- and we did that because, as I talked about before, by the time we were doing our earnings calls, we were usually halfway or more than halfway through the quarter we were providing guidance on.

So much like I was pointing out in these reports, there's a decent amount of real data to look at. Outside of that, I would not spend much time discussing with people what gain-on-sale margin would be because -- and I can go through everything we've discussed this morning -- there are so many variables. There's not a lot of -- you're not -- there's not a lot of productive things that are going to come from that discussion.

- Q. Were you involved in setting a goal for closed loan volume on a quarterly basis?
- A. Same -- same type of situation. Closed loan volume is a little different because the strategies that we were executing on had -- would have more of an impact on growing market share. And so you could think about how much closed-loan volume you might do next quarter if you execute on those strategies.

So we would have discussions. I believe we also gave guidance for the quarter -- if we're

A. I think the primary purpose of -- in my view, the primary purpose of that call was to share with everyone what the company had done in the previous

everyone what the company had done in the previous quarter.

As I referenced before, where we thought it was relevant or where we thought we could provide accurate information, provide a little guidance for the -- for the next quarter, build relationships with -- when we -- when -- unlike most companies, when we went public, we only sold 5 percent of -- of the company.

So one of the dilemmas that we had run into is we -- is something that they called "float." We didn't have a lot of float in the marketplace. That means there's not a lot of shares to trade.

And so you prefer, I think -- as -- as it was explained to me by -- by investment bankers, you prefer to have long-term investors on your -- your shares.

They get the long-term strategy. They understand what you're trying to achieve as a business. They -- they understand the model of growing that client base, the lifetime value.

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reporting Q4, I believe we gave guidance in Q1 for -- for closed loan volume, because we had data of what had already closed. And as I just referenced, we had a relatively good understanding of some of the strategies we were -- we had implemented.

- Q. Do you have an understanding of what an earnings call is?
- A. I believe so. I participated in a few. They occur quarterly. I believe -- anybody, I think, can participate, analysts, investors.

The way that we did our earnings calls there, a press release would go out roughly the same time as the earnings call. We had prepared remarks that the team worked on, IR, legal. We had a Q&A session, again, that the team worked on. I mean, clearly, as the CEO, I had a good understanding of the business. But I thought it was important that finance, accounting, legal, investor relations, everyone kind of weighed in.

And then we would take the -- a Q&A. In most cases, the questions were pretty spot on to what we had prepared for. And then the call would end.

Q. What's the purpose of an earnings call, in your

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It was harder for long-term investors to, I think -- we were a new company -- to own shares.

And I think we had some shorter-term -- I don't know if you recall, but during this period of time, there was, like, a situation where there were these retail meme investors that were not really looking at the strategies of a company. They were kind of jumping on the bandwagon and trading the stock, and I think our stock got caught up in that for a period of time.

And so you're trying, through these earnings calls, to build a relationship with the long-term investors. They -- they understand what your strategies are. They understand what you're trying to achieve.

And then we -- we also used that as an opportunity to -- or I did -- to -- to thank or congratulate team members if we were doing a good job.

 $I'm\ trying\ to\ think\ if\ I\ missed$ anything. I -- I think that -- that's the purpose of our earnings call.

- Q. How did you prepare for an earnings call?
 - A. Well, a -- a team would prepare for the earnings

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call. Julie Booth, our CFO, who also had prepared remarks. Bob Walters. Some folks from our public relations team. Some -- our general counsel and a deputy counsel. Accounting. Some individuals who had some experience working in investment banks and knew a little bit more about Wall Street. Everyone participated to give their guidance, suggestions.

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The public relations gentleman would write a -- write a script for me, and then I would look at it and make sure that I thought it was reflective of how I felt about the company. Most of my comments were directed, again, towards the strategy and the long-term vision of the company. I believe Julie Booth wrote most of her script herself. She would know better than I would. So we would do that.

The team would, as I had mentioned before, work on the Q&A portion of it. We would get together and -- and review it, get everybody's feedback on does it look good, does the -- do the questions look good, do the proposed responses to the questions look good. Of course, that's why we had legal there, as well. And then we would show up the day of the earnings call and -- and do it.

Q. Who prepared your script for the earnings call?

et cetera.

- Q. Was it important to you to be accurate on the earnings calls?
- A. I believe I was always very accurate in my feelings about the business, the long-term strategy, the lifetime value of clients, the flywheel we were building. I endeavored to do my best.

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So let's, Derick, introduce Tab 33 as Farner 3.

MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION:

DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 3
Earnings Call Transcript
12:34 p.m.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. So, Mr. Farner, you've been handed Exhibit Farner 3. If you could just take some time to familiarize yourself with the document, and let me know when you're ready.
- A. Okay. A lot of questions here.

ATTORNEY NELLES: I was bounced off. If somebody could authenticate and let me back on.

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Derick, can you

authenticate Sharon, please?

ATTORNEY CIVIDINI: Oh, sure.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

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- A. Like I said, I think, most of the time, Aaron
 Emerson would take the first crack at writing the
 script. He was my head of PR.
 - Q. Did you have practice sessions to prepare for the earnings calls?
 - A. We would do -- as we just touched on, we -- we would get together and kind of review the information.

I wouldn't necessarily call them practice sessions. We didn't sit there and, you know, practice. It was more of just a discussion. And then that would get -- that was an opportunity for anybody to give their feedback on -- on, hey, we shouldn't say that, say this, you know, whatever it might be.

- Q. Did someone prepare draft answers to questions that you thought you might get from analysts during the earnings calls?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And I believe you testified earlier that it would be important to be accurate during -- during the earnings calls; is that right?
- A. I don't recall saying that, but I think everyone did their best, as human beings, to represent the company and what -- how we felt it was performing,

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- Q. So, Mr. Farner, you should feel free to read the whole document. My questions are going to be about pages 10, 11, or 12, but you should feel free to read whatever you need to read in order to answer questions.
- 6 A. I'm almost -- I'm almost done.
- 7 Q. Yeah, fine.
 - A. I'll make sure I go back -- back there. It's just -- it's a 20-pager.
- 10 Q. Yep.
- 11 A. Okay. I'm sorry. You said pages...
- 12 Q. If you could go to page 10.

My first question is: Do you know what this document is?

- A. It -- it looks to be the -- the -- the transcripts from the -- the earnings call that -- that we did on February 25th of 2021.
- Q. Does Rocket post earnings call transcripts on its Investor Relations web page?
- 20 A. I don't know.
 - Q. Do you have any reason to doubt that this is available on Rocket's Investor Relations web page? ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form.
 - A. I don't have any reason to think it would be there or it wouldn't be there. I honestly just don't

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know. BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Q. Okay. Did you review a transcript of this conference call with your attorneys to prepare for this deposition? ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'm going to obviously instruct him not to answer a question that was designed to invade the attorney-client privilege and the attorney work-product doctrine. BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Q. Are --ATTORNEY SCOTT: I don't know if that was intentional, but I will instruct the witness not -- not to answer. BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Q. And are you going to follow your counsel's instruction? A. I think I should. Q. All right. Let's go to the bottom of page 10. A. Okay. Q. Do you see there that James Eugene Faucette, at the bottom -- very, very bottom of the page has a question for Julie Booth? A. Yes, I see he has a question. Q. Could you read that exchange, and let me know when

A. Yeah, I'm trying to put it in context here, so I'm going to have to back up and maybe read how we got to that.

Yeah, so she is talking about the guidance in -- the midpoint guidance of loan volume in Q1 of 2021 and comparing it, as she said above, to the Q1 -- is this 2021? Yes -- of the year prior.

- Q. I guess my question is: I just want to understand whether you have an understanding of what she means by "the midpoint of our guidance is roughly 95-percent higher than our Q1 volume"?
- A. Yes. Again, reading the entire -- her entire statement, I believe she's saying the midpoint of the guidance we provided is 95 percent higher than what we had done in Q1 2020 a year ago.
- Q. Got it. Thank you.
- A. It's important you -- you have to read all of these things. If you take a few words out of a statement someone's made and take it out of context, it can be confusing.
- Q. Yeah, I just wanted to get an understanding of whether you knew what she was talking about.
- A. Sure. You have to read it at all.
- 25 Q. So was it your understanding that during the first

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you are done?

A. Yeah, I see that he asked a question about -- or he makes a statement about guidance that we provided for the first quarter.

He then asks a question about providing color for, I think he says, the -- the course of the year.

Julie then responds by, I think, reminding him of what we'd done in previous historical quarters. She talks about the business and some of the different levers we have, and then reiterates the guidance that we provided in the first quarter.

Q. Do you see where Julie Booth responds -- this is towards the end of her response: "So to put this in perspective, just a little bit more, the midpoint for our guidance is roughly 90 percent" -- strike that.

Let me read it again.

Do you see in Julie Booth's response where she says: "So to put this in perspective, just a little bit more, the midpoint for our guidance is roughly 95 percent higher than our 1Q (sic) volume"?

Do you see that?

quarter of 2021, mortgage interest rates were rising?

A. Was it my understanding during the first quarter of 2021 -- as we had talked about before -- well, let me take a step back.

Because if you -- if you read this whole transcript -- and I think if we were to look back at other earnings calls we had done, we had agreed with analysts, Jamie Dimon, all talking heads on television. The rates we experienced during the pandemic were abnormally low. Everyone had talked about the fact that we would see -- and I said it -- rates would tick up. So rates were going to move, and the general consensus was that rates would be moving up, and so we discussed that.

Is it very difficult, impossible in my opinion, for me to determine where interest rates will be 6 months, 12 months. I don't know. No one knows.

So my understanding in Q1 was we had a great 2020, I thought 2021 would be better, and it was. And we were executing on the strategies that we'd come up with. As I, I think, used the word "testified" before, the short-term movement -- and I said this in this earnings call -- the short-term

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movement of interest rates, you can't predict it. It's not a -- it is not -- there are far more important components to growing the value and market share of a company.

So I wouldn't have been thinking about what interest rates are going to be doing in 2021, and outside of having a general view of what the general public or analysts thought, I think my view would be the same.

Q. So you testified, "So I wouldn't have been thinking about what interest" -- you testified, "So I wouldn't have been thinking about what interest rates are going to be doing in 2021."

You weren't concerned about how interest rates might affect Rocket's mortgage business?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

Misstates the testimony.

A. Well, what I think I said was, the world, everyone had a -- had an understanding that rates had been abnormally low and they were probably going to tick up or rise.

If you read this entire transcript, you'll the partner channel, the E*TRADE announcement, the Schwab, the marketing, the flywheel, Rocket Auto, Rocket real estate, all of why I was probably the largest buyer of Rocket stock in the last year and a half, because I believe in the long-term value. And this situation created an opportunity for us to be able to grow market share.

So, no, I wasn't concerned. I looked at it, as I've just described, playing out much like many other situations over the course of my time there had played out.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. What about in the short term, how would rising interest rates affect Rocket in the short term? ATTORNEY SCOTT: Hold on. Objection, form.

A. Yeah, I don't know -- I don't know what you mean by "short term." I don't know what you mean by "affect." I think I've been pretty clear that I believe the movement of interest rates, up or down, creates opportunity for a company that can reach and market.

And I think it is, in my thought process at the time as the CEO of what we were building, was not something that I was going to spend a lot of time thinking about. I was focused on the tech platform, the investments in that technology,

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these other components that we had that no one else has, which was giving us the ability to transform.

So a blip or movement in mortgage interest rates isn't going to affect the lifetime value of a client. In fact, usually -- and I think I spoke to this in this -- in this earnings call as well. If rates were to rise for a short period of time, that will help move people out of the business. People who got in the business in the pandemic, the second half of the pandemic when it was easy, they'll leave. They'll go do something else.

And although the universe of clients who might get a mortgage for a period of time, six months or a year, might shrink, our ability to lean in and gain market share as those other people step away, gives us an opportunity to accelerate our business, to lean in, to do the marketing.

So as I said here, I viewed the movement of interest rates -- and I've witnessed that in the 27 years I was there -- some of our best times came after the movement of interest rates.

I'm not there now, but I very much hope that they'll continue to execute on that, because yet another opportunity has been created. That's

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creating a business that was different than a traditional mortgage originator.

So I -- I don't necessarily think I have a view about what affect -- as I said before, "affect" probably means if we lean in, eventually creates an opportunity for us to grow.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. From the first quarter of 2021 to the second quarter of 2021, were you concerned that rising interest rates were going to have a negative impact on Rocket's revenue?
- A. At what time period are you asking?
- Q. From the first quarter of 2021 to the second quarter of 2021.
 - A. In the first quarter of 2021, I would not have known what the second quarter interest rates would be. So I guess I'm kind of...
 - Q. My question is: For the first quarter of 2021 to the second quarter of 2021, were you concerned that rising interest rates were going to have a negative impact on Rocket's revenue?
 - A. Again, I believe in 2021, Rocket had a record year. Did more loan volume than in 2020, and I think maybe equal or more revenue than in 2020, which speaks to the business initiatives that we put in

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place to allow the company to grow, even if rates
 were going to move.
 So my -- my understanding of and belief

So my -- my understanding of and belief in the strategies that we were implementing allowed me to feel pretty comfortable about what was going to happen with the company, regardless of interest rate movement.

Q. So is your testimony that you weren't concerned about how rising interest rates were going to be affecting revenue from the first quarter of 2021 to the second quarter of 2021?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Hold on. Hold on. Objection to form. Misstates the testimony. You can answer.

A. Okay. I -- you're using the word "concern." But that's kind of like a personal -- I would think about the company in a long-term perspective. We had been a private company for all the years I had been there, save the last seven or eight months. We still -- "we" being RHI -- still owned 95 percent of the company.

My philosophy is around investing time, energy, and effort to build something special over the long haul. I read an article the other day that Amazon stock didn't, like, move positively just refreshing my memory, reading this, it reminds me that analysts were aware -- again, everyone was aware. The projections had been that interest rates were going to change. People thought the Fed had overdone it. Clearly, I think everyone was shocked in whatever it was, the middle of April, when things moved much quicker than people had expected.

But my sense is that analysts understood what we were doing, why we were different. They talked about it in reports they would write, that we had the flywheel, that we had the multiple small businesses that were growing to generate other revenue, that we had the different channels.

And although interest rates could be going up or down and affect a short run, they understood the value of the company and how it was different than other mortgage originators. I think that's why we traded at a higher multiple than others.

And so I didn't sense that they were concerned. I -- I sensed that they were excited about what we were building and what we were going to do and how it was going to lead to a different type of business.

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for, like, ten years or something crazy like that. Now, it's the most valuable company in the world.

And I think I subscribe to that same view, that that's why you're there, at least that's why I'm there. I'm there to set strategies to build something special over the long haul. There'll be quarters that the revenue goes up. There'll be quarters that the revenue goes down.

More interesting to me is: Are we growing market share? Are we gaining clients? That's how I thought about the business.

I'm going to step over here and just grab this water really quick, unless somebody wants to grab it for me.

 $\label{eq:attorney} \mbox{ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'll get it for you.} \\ \mbox{I'll get it.}$

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. Was it your understanding that analysts were concerned about how rising interest rates might affect Rocket's business during this time?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

A. I -- I can -- all I can use is -- is the information I have in listening to analysts' questions, talking with them. And, again, just --

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. So it's your testimony that you didn't think analysts were concerned about how rising interest rates might affect Rocket's business during this time?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

A. I think what I just said was that I acknowledged that everyone, including the analysts, were aware that rates were going to be ticking up. I can't speak to their level of concern. Probably go look at their reports and -- but what I sensed was that they understood the value of this company and all the things we were working on.

And if you -- if you read -- in here they even acknowledge that they understand that and they get it, and they say words like "that's very helpful." So, yeah, I'm -- and I can't speak to someone's concern. What I'm trying to address is what I think they understood about the company, and I think they understand its long-term value.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. So let's go to page 12 of the transcript. Actually, I think the question from Ryan Matthew Nash from Goldman Sachs starts at the bottom of page 11 and goes on to page 12.

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Could you read his question and then
read your answer, and let me know when you're
ready?

A. Sure.

ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'm sorry, you said h

ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'm sorry, you said his question begins on the bottom of 11?

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So -- yes, sorry.

The bottom of 11, Ryan Matthew Nash from Goldman Sachs Group asked a question. The actual text of the question is located on the next page. It starts "got it."

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Okay. I just wanted to make sure this wasn't cut off. Yeah. So it lists his name and title, and then the question starts on the top of 12?

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Correct. ATTORNEY SCOTT: Okay.

A. Okay. Yeah. I've read the -- the question. And I think he's asking me about the dynamics of the industry, the mortgage industry and rates, and I go on to kind of remind him of all the -- I think that day we actually announced that we were going to be partnering with E*TRADE, including Charles Schwab, State Farm, Intuit, TurboTax. So we have all of these strong partnerships.

because if we get that client today, it gives us an opportunity for revenue in the future.

I say that right here: We're not thinking about -- not only are we thinking about the profitability, of course, in the first transaction, we're thinking about the lifetime value of that client, lifetime value, not only with mortgage, but real estate, auto, the other businesses that we were working on building. And so that -- that's why I say, I think interest rates going up or down isn't what we're focused on.

I'm excited about it because I think it creates a real opportunity for us to grow market share and grow our business in the long run.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. So thank you for that answer.

Do you see the end of that section where it says: "So I guess you can tell we're pretty excited about it and don't see interest rates going up or down really having an impact on our business one way or the other"?

A. Yes. That's why I read the entire question, so we could have context for that statement as it relates to all of the other things I had just discussed, what would create our excitement and confidence.

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I think the point I'm making here is that in a market that might experience some headwind, companies -- large companies like that are more likely to want to partner with other strong companies, so that bodes well for us, which I say right here.

It's the same situation with -- with the broker community, that they're going to be -- if -- if the market becomes more challenging, they're going to be nervous. It was not but seven or eight months prior, where one of the larger TPO providers had stopped -- stopped accepting broker applications because they didn't have the capital to manage their hedge. So that was obviously fresh on my mind, that these brokers would want to work with somebody who really is stable.

I then go on to say that as we see interest rates tick up a bit, I think we're going to see an opportunity to lean in and invest our marketing dollars. Again, this is because others who aren't as efficient as us don't have the ability to make marketing dollars work when we can. So we can invest more there and hopefully grab market share, which, as I've talked about, is really the primary thing that I'm thinking about,

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- Q. So did you believe that interest rates going up or down was not going to have an impact on the business one way or another?
 - A. Yes, ma'am. I felt as if our strategies were going to allow us to grow that business, and in effect, they did.

2021 was a better year than 2020, so we executed on those strategies, closed, I think, \$351 billion in mortgage volume. And that's what gave me the confidence.

Again, I don't find myself looking at week to week or month to month, because I can't control the little ups and downs.

 $What \ I \ can \ control \ is \ making \ the \ larger \\ long-term \ investments \ in \ the \ business \ to \ allow \ it \\ to \ succeed. \ And \ that's \ what \ I'm \ speaking \ to \ here.$

Q. So I just want to understand what you meant by this statement.

ATTORNEY SCOTT: He just answered your question about the statement.

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Jeff, let me finish my question --

 $\label{eq:attorney} \mbox{ATTORNEY SCOTT: You're going to ask} \\ \mbox{again?}$

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: -- then you can

1 before it was filed with the SEC? 1 object. Let me finish my question. 2 2 ATTORNEY SCOTT: You're going to ask him A. I'm certain that I -- if I remember correctly, it 3 3 again? Pay attention. was about this thick, so I know I reviewed it, but 4 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 4 I couldn't recall every word that was in it. 5 5 Q. "So I guess you can tell we're pretty excited about Q. Do you disagree that --6 6 it and don't see interest rates going up or down A. And I would say that I would rely on attorneys, 7 7 accountants, all of the people that we paid a lot really having an impact on our business one way or 8 8 the other." of money to, to ensure that that was written 9 9 Were you referring to a long-term impact properly. 10 or a short-term impact? 10 Q. Do you disagree with the statement that Rocket's 11 business is significantly impacted by interest 11 A. Well, I suppose when you use the term "short" or 12 "long," I don't know what you're referencing. 12 rates? 13 A. I think I will refer you back to the comment I just 13 From my response that I previously said, 14 14 made, which is I don't know. Whoever wrote that, I I'm focusing on where this business is going and 15 growing. 15 don't know what they're solving for. I don't know 16 16 There will be ups and downs in any if they're speaking about a week or a day or a 17 17 business weekly, monthly, but the things we can month. 18 My focus, my leadership was focused on 18 control are these strategies, are these 19 19 partnerships. And that's exactly what happened. growing a business, creating value for a business. 20 That's why we were able to grow and do more in 20 We were discussing long-term investors earlier. 21 2021. 21 Long-term investors are not concerned 22 Remember, this is February of 2021. So 22 about what happens over a week or a month. They're 23 23 ten months later, if we look -- and 2020 was our thinking about what's going to happen over three 24 best year ever -- 2021 we outperformed 2020. 24 years or five years. 25 Q. Do you recall that Rocket told the market in its 25 In that context, my belief is that

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IPO registration statement that Rocket's business
was significantly impacted by interest rates?

A. I don't recall specific language that a lawyer
might write, nor do I ask them to run the business.

Q. Do you disagree with the statement that Rocket's
business is significantly impacted by interest
rates?

A. I believe that Rocket's business. Rocket Companies.

A. I believe that Rocket's business, Rocket Companies, as a FinTech provider, has the opportunity -- again, I'm not there anymore, I'm not leading the organization anymore -- when I was there, had the opportunity to transform into something different than what the traditional mortgage industry had seen.

Could there be the ups and downs over a short period of time? Of course, every business has that. Maybe that's what those attorneys are referencing in that statement you've said.

But long-term, Rocket Money, Rocket Auto, Rocket Mortgage, Rocket Loans, creating an ecosystem, similar to a bank without a large balance sheet, I firmly believe would create a company that could continue to grow and grow market share, regardless of what interest rates are doing.

Q. Did you review the IPO registration statement

interest rates become far less relevant in all of these other strategies of acquiring clients, being able to sell those other products to those clients.

That's -- and it's been demonstrated.

Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, over and over again, other companies have achieved this very thing.

Q. So let me ask it this way: Would you agree with the statement that Rocket's business is significantly impacted by interest rates?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form, asked and answered four times now.

A. I don't know what else to say to you. I've told you exactly how I feel about it, so I don't have anything to add.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. If you saw a statement in the IPO registration statement that you disagreed with, what would you have done about it?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

A. I would probably reach out to an attorney or Paul Weiss or someone and ask them if there was a reason for that statement. And I'm sure they might give me an explanation. And if I thought it was a sufficient one, then I would be okay with it.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

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Page 141 Page 143 1 1 Q. Did you raise a concern with the statement that 2025? 2 Rocket's business is significantly impacted by 2 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 3 interest rates? 3 Q. 2021. 4 4 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form, A. I'm sorry. 5 lacks the actual predicate. 5 Q. Sorry if I said 2025. 6 6 A. No, it's me. I'm getting confused. I'm sorry. You can answer. THE WITNESS: Okay. 7 7 Q. You just -- let me just reread the question. 8 8 A. I -- I can't recall what I did many years ago on a You just made the comment, "This was 9 document that had thousands of words on it. 9 many months after" -- "this was many months later, 10 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 10 after the IPO." 11 11 Q. So you don't have a specific recollection of Do you think that at the time you made 12 reading these words and alerting someone to the 12 this statement in the first quarter of 2021, the 13 13 fact that you may have disagreed with this statement "Rocket's business was significantly 14 14 impacted by interest rates" was no longer true? statement? 15 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form. 15 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form, 16 A. Yeah, I can't remember if I did or did not. 16 lacks a factual predicate. 17 17 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: You can answer. 18 18 Q. Looking at the statement here that you made to A. I think -- well, if we go -- go back, you actually 19 investors: "So I guess you can tell we're pretty 19 kind of shared with me that statement in the IPO 20 excited about it and don't see interest rates going 20 filina. 21 21 When I was doing this, that statement up or down really having an impact on our business 22 one way or another," do you see that statement in 22 was not something that I think I was thinking 23 23 conflict with what Rocket told the market in its about, aware of, so I would not have -- I think 24 IPO registration statement, that Rocket's business 24 you're asking me did I have some sort of conflict. 25 was significantly impacted by interest rates? 25 My statement here was based on all the Page 144 Page 142 1 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form. 1 knowledge that I had here. I wasn't -- only now 2 2 You can answer. that you brought that up to me, am I aware of that 3 3 A. I don't. Again, I would probably talk to Angelo at this time, I can't think --4 Vitale or someone to understand the purpose of that 4 ATTORNEY SCOTT: That was the predicate 5 5 statement on that -- at that IPO time, recalling problem. 6 this is many months later. 6 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Can you just let him 7 7 And I think I've done a nice job of answer the question, Jeff, and then you can make 8 8 explaining to investors, analysts, and whoever else your objection. 9 is -- is reading or listening to this where my 9 ATTORNEY SCOTT: No, but that's why I 10 10 confidence comes from, and why the company did have was objecting because you have to lay a factual 11 11 success in 2021. All of these different business predicate and show that he was aware of it at the 12 initiatives, that did give me the confidence to 12 time that he could answer it. 13 13 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: know that we had the opportunity to operate a 14 strong business, even if rates were going up or 14 Q. Mr. Farner, did you sign the companies' Form 10-Ks? 15 15 down. A. I believe I did. BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 16 Q. And did you review the information in the 10-Ks 16 17 17 Q. So you just made the comment that "this was many before you signed the Form 10-Ks? 18 18 months later" after the IPO. A. Yes. They -- they gave me the 10-Ks, and I did my 19 Do you think at the time you made this 19 best to review them. 20 20 statement in the first quarter of 2021, the Q. What about the Form 10-Qs? Did you review the form

A. This is -- remembering that we had only been public

for a short period of time. I know we did 10-Qs.

I'm sure if you showed me that, I could tell you.

But sitting here right now, I can't recall what's

statement, "Rocket's business was significantly

impacted by interest rates" was no longer true?

A. You're -- I -- I think I'm being lost in your

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

question. You're saying at the time in February of

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Page 145 Page 147 1 1 on a 10-Q, so I -- I can't say for certain. less in revenue (990 million) to your point 2 2 If it was information that was relevant yesterday. I have 380 margins for the quarter and 3 3 to me that I'm reporting, then I would imagine I so far they are hanging around 4 all-in so 4 would have signed. I'm just not that familiar with 4 hopefully I'm being too conservative. Locks are 5 5 85 billion." 6 6 Q. During the relevant time period, did you sign the Do you see that? 7 7 Form 10-Qs? A. I do. 8 8 A. Like I said, if you could show me the form, I could Q. What's your understanding of what Brian was trying 9 probably become more knowledgeable about it and 9 to convey to you? 10 then tell you. But I'm -- I just can't remember 10 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form. 11 what is on a 10-Q right now. 11 You can answer. 12 Q. I'm not asking you about what was in the 10-Q. I'm 12 THE WITNESS: Okay. 13 just asking whether you signed the 10-Q during the A. Yeah. I -- I don't know when he says "here's the 13 14 relevant period? 14 side-by-side," if he's talking to me or -- or A. Yeah. Knowing what's in it would help me 15 15 Julie. I don't have a recollection of having a 16 16 understand or tell you if I signed it or not. discussion with him about this. But it's early 17 17 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: I'm going to move on January or mid-January. Around that time period is 18 when we would do our strategic planning for the 18 to an email, but if you think this is a good time 19 to break for lunch, we can do that. 19 organization. Sometimes in December and sometimes 20 ATTORNEY SCOTT: That'd be great. We --20 the first weeks of January. I can't recall this 21 I think it was here about 20 minutes ago. 21 year. If I remember correctly, it may have been 22 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Mm-hmm. 22 somewhere in -- somewhere in Georgia, and it may 23 23 ATTORNEY SCOTT: So, yeah, thank you. have been after the first of the year. 24 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: We are going off the 24 So, again, if we go back to the 25 record. 1:18. 25 conversation we were having around setting the Page 146 Page 148 1 (Off the record at 1:18 p.m.) 1 strategies, the key objectives for the 2 2 (Back on the record at 1:51 p.m.) organization, usually those involve some sort of 3 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: We are back on the 3 tech investment, marketing investment, banker 4 record. 1:52. 4 hiring. 5 5 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Derick, could you And when you hire a mortgage banker, you 6 introduce Tab 26 as Farner 4, please. 6 don't hire them today and, you know, they write 7 7 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION: loans tomorrow. You hire them, you train them, 8 **DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 4** 8 they get licensed, so you're carrying the cost of 9 Tab 26 9 the mortgage banker for four or five, six months, 10 10 1:52 p.m. maybe longer. 11 11 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So as you're thinking about all of the Q. Mr. Farner, you've just been handed Exhibit Farner 12 12 strategies, you need to figure out, okay, am I 13 13 4. If you could read it and let me know when going to have the capital to pay for these 14 you're ready. 14 strategies. 15 15 A. Okay. So based on the timing of this, I can Q. Do you recognize this document? 16 16 surmise that maybe I was asking him that so I can 17 A. I mean, I don't remember seeing this document, but 17 ensure, as we were coming up with our strategies 18 it looks like a document that Brian Brown sent to 18 for the year, you know, are we -- are we going to 19 me and to Julie Booth. 19 be looking profitable. I'm not sure I would have 20 20 Q. Who is Brian Brown? asked for a comparison, that maybe something that 21 A. He's the CFO now of the company. I believe he was 21 he was doing. Again, I don't recall the 22 22 maybe the chief accounting officer back then. conversation. I think looking at Q1, which, again, is 23 Q. So starting with the email, it reads: "Here's the 23

the beginning part of the quarter, so there's still

a lot of uncertainty. We could go look at the

side-by-side comparison you asked for. This is

just Rocket Mortgage FYI. It's almost 1 billion

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earnings to see what we actually did. But a basic 2 understanding of EBITDA so we can plan properly. 3 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

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- Q. Was part of the strategic planning that you did in 2021, did that involve a review of how the company was doing financially?
- A. I would say it involved having some foundation of knowing the dollars we were going to spend would result in growth of the organization.

And we've talked about this already. There's multiple ways to look at growth. I think the most important way is to look at market share and gaining clients because that brings the most value over the lifetime of the organization.

But you want to pressure test that and say, hey, if we're going to spend -- let's say this year, perhaps, we -- we can go back. I believe we increased the marketing budget. Will that result in -- and it did -- more closed-loan volume. So using that to pressure test the strategies.

- Q. Did the strategic planning in January of 2021 involve a review of what Rocket was going to be forecasting financially for the rest of the year?
- A. When you say Rocket forecasting, I want to be cautious because, based on knowing how the industry

indicates closed volume was going to decrease from

- 2 the fourth quarter of 2020 to the first quarter of 3 2021?
 - A. I see a range there. And when we think about the number of units, I think in a previous document we looked at, was in the hundreds of thousands. I'm not sure on January 15th how we could make that prediction because there's so much time left in that quarter. So it's a number. I'm not sure it's a relevant number based on the relatively small difference in the volume.
 - Q. When you say you see a range, what are you referring to?
 - A. Well, I see that we did 107, and this says, in this particular document, 95 billion. So that range or difference between 107 and 95 is a relatively small difference.

And, again, I don't know how somebody would come up with the \$95 billion number so early in the quarter. But perhaps this was a baseline, and then we were layering our strategies on top of it. Again, I can't remember the context of the purpose of the document.

Q. Were you concerned that the net gain-on-sale number appeared to be decreasing in this document?

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works, I don't think -- we didn't say, here's our set forecast. It would involve some rough ideas on what different scenarios or possibilities might be, knowing that there's no way to know for certain.

But, again, in the context of what will that look like, I think we added team members in 2021. So we knew we were going to grow expenses for the long-term strategy, and does that work inside of the, you know, the context of the -the -- roughly the range of loans we would be originating.

- Q. So just going to the attachment on the second page, do you see the -- at line 7, net gain on sale from 4Q 2020 to 1Q 2021 decreasing?
- A. Again, in this document, I see that someone has put in that the net gain-on-sale revenue is lower. I can't speak to whether that's accurate, not accurate.

In general, the industry and everyone involved had an understanding that probably interest rates were rising and gain-on-sale margins were going to decrease a little bit. But I -- I don't know the accuracy of this forecast number and how it actually turned out.

Q. Do you also see at line 6 of the attachment that it

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A. In the mortgage business, Q4 would represent loans you wrote -- when I say "wrote," applications you took -- in September, October, November, and then you, you know, close them in October, November, December.

Q1 would represent loans you originated in November and December and into January. And traditionally, because November, December are holidays and Christmas and people work, obviously, and the kids are in the middle of school, the weather's terrible, so a lot of people don't list their homes. It's sort of known that your loan volume will probably be down a little bit from where you had been in Q4. So I would not have been concerned about that because that would seem normal

- Q. Same question for closed volume. Were you concerned that closed volume was decreasing between Q4 2020 and the forecast for Q1 2021?
- A. I may have misspoke myself, that I thought the last question you asked was for closed volume. Did I...
- 22 Q. It was for net gain on sale?
- 23 A. Oh, I didn't -- I didn't --
 - Q. Here, I -- I can ask them again.

Let me start with net gain on sale.

Pages 149 to 152

Page 153 Page 155 1 A. Okay. 1 about market fluctuation. Even though they lock in 2 Q. Were you concerned that the net gain-on-sale number 2 the interest rate, our capital markets group is 3 3 appeared to be decreasing in this document from 4Q still subject to that market fluctuation. 4 2020 to the forecast for 1Q 2021? 4 So -- and this is where probably a Bob 5 5 A. I was not concerned. And for the same response or a Bill -- Bob Walters or Bill Banfield would be 6 I -- I gave, it's similar drivers in -- in either, 6 more helpful. But they have a process to invest in 7 7 that seasonality would impact the folders and then other financial instruments. And their goal is to 8 8 that translates to the selling of the loans. make sure that -- I'm going to use an example. If 9 Q. But you would agree with me that this document does 9 that interest rate is locked at 5 percent, when we 10 show that the forecast for Q1 2021 is lower than 10 close the loan 45 days later, we're -- we're going 11 the actuals for Q4 2020 for net gain on sale? 11 to be okay when we sell the loan, even if rates 12 A. Again, I don't know -- I wouldn't call this a 12 have moved up or down, because they're offsetting 13 forecast. And I don't know how someone could 13 that with the other financial instruments 14 predict Q1 so early in the month. So on this piece 14 they're -- they're buying. 15 of paper, I can tell you that the numbers are 15 So they're kind of normalizing the 16 different. I see no relevance in that. 16 profitability on the loan through this -- this 17 17 Q. Do you see in the top left where it says "FCST"? hedging process. 18 Do you know what that means? 18 Q. Do you see where Brandon McCann writes: "Good 19 A. No. We -- we talked about this before. I -- until 19 afternoon, Revenue Forecasts. Our Q1 revenue 20 you had pointed that out in the last document, I 20 forecast decreased negative 21 million, and our net 21 had not seen it before. 21 volume decreased negative 728 million DOD. This 22 Q. That doesn't mean forecast to you? 22 was mainly due to a decrease in our NRL projection 23 23 A. It could. Again, I had never seen that until today for the remainder of the guarter and decreases in 24 when you pointed it out. 24 forecasted margins across the channels. Some of 25 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Derick, let's do Tab 25 the decrease in forecasted margins was offset by Page 154 Page 156 1 36 as Farner 5. 1 our mix continuing to move in favor of DTC"? 2 2 MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION: Do you see that? A. Yeah, he is pointing out -- and we've discussed 3 **DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 5** 3 4 Email from Brandon McCann 4 that there are so many levers we can pull, that, 5 5 2:06 p.m. you know, if one channel is causing a decrease in 6 6 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: revenue and another channel has the opportunity to 7 7 Q. So, Mr. Farner, you have just been handed an make that up, we can lean more into marketing and 8 Exhibit labeled Farner 5. If you can, just review 8 so forth. I don't know -- this goes back to the 9 it and let me know when you're ready. 9 10 10 A. Okay. other discussion we had about multiple teams in 11 11 Q. Do you see this is an email from Brandon McCann to multiple areas. So we could have finance working 12 12

you and others sent on February 24th, 2021? A. Yeah, this is an email from the hedge desk. So this is in capital markets. It looks like I was a recipient of the email but not an email that I would be reviewing. Q. What is the hedge desk? A. At the time, the hedge desk was the individuals in

- capital markets that were, I believe, responsible for hedging the loans that were rate locked. Q. What do you mean by "hedging the loans that were
- rate locked"?
- A. So when a client makes an application for a mortgage, in many cases they want to lock in their interest rate. That way they don't have to worry

on one forecast as they think about expenses. You could have the hedge desk working on another set of documents as they think about what they're -they're hedging.

So I'm interpreting this as -- this is Brandon's work for whatever he's doing in capital markets. I couldn't say specifically how he's

- Q. Do you understand NRL to mean rate lock in this
- A. I think it means net rate lock.
- Q. Thank you.

And do you understand DTC in this email to mean direct-to-consumer?

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1 A. That's my understanding.

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- 2 Q. Were there finance meetings where quarterly 3 forecasts were discussed during the relevant time 4 period?
 - A. Maybe a qualifier: Meetings, or meetings that I participated in?
 - Q. Let's just start with meetings that you are aware
 - A. I know the finance team met regularly. They had a lot of people working on reports and so forth.

Again, I want to be cautious about the term "forecast," because as I've stressed before, outside of looking at a Fannie Mae or a Freddie Mac or a Mortgage Bankers Association guesstimate of what the mortgage market might do, it's -- I don't know of a way to forecast what's going to happen in -- in the future with interest rates or -- we went from whatever it was, 4 trillion, to less than, I think, a trillion and a half in mortgages in a year. No one would have forecasted that or thought of that.

So they -- the finance team, they have discussed different scenarios as they think about what we're doing. And -- and I think a lot of that is in conjunction to the -- like I said, the

decisions about spend. I think banking would be thinking about that from a hiring perspective.

Did finance maybe support them or help them? Possibly. In other cases, I don't think so. We were pretty decentralized.

And, again, that's because, maybe different than another public company, our mission is to grow market share and increase clients. That's how you add value to the organization.

And whether you make a billion dollars or a billion and a half dollars, that will come out in the wash over time, but we weren't driving toward a specific number.

So each person was thinking about how can I -- or what do I need to do inside my business area to achieve the strategy that's going to help the business grow, which is what kind of caused everyone to create these scenarios, I think, on their own.

- Q. When you say, "which is what kind of caused everyone to create these scenarios, I think, on their own," what do you mean by that?
- A. Well, you had asked me if finance had -- had done them, and I was trying to clarify that I think a lot of different areas had thought about the

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business so they could work on their strategies.

- 1 investments we were making in the tech platform, 2 the other companies. We were obviously doing quite 3 well, so we had the capital to continue those 4
 - Q. So was it the finance team's responsibility to put together scenarios forecasting quarterly results?
 - A. The finance team was responsible for putting together the GAAP or quarterly results when a quarter was closed. I mean, we needed that to be able to prepare our earnings calls, et cetera.
 - Q. I think my question was a little bit different.

Was it the finance team's responsibility to put together scenarios forecasting quarterly results versus putting together the GAAP quarterly results that were final?

- A. Are you saying kind of forward looking?
- 17 Q. Yes.
 - A. Okay. I would say that there were multiple -- and we kind of saw it here. I think there were multiple areas of the company that were all thinking about the future, and then trying to plan their business, you know, according -- plan the business accordingly.

So marketing would -- would look at some sort of a projection so that they could make some

And finance may have participated if they had a question or a concern, but I wouldn't say that finance was responsible. Each area took the charge of building what they thought related to their -- their business area.

- Q. Was there an organization in Rocket that was responsible for putting together scenarios to forecast how the business was going to do financially quarter over quarter?
- A. For who?
- O. For the business as a whole.
 - A. There -- if I'm Brian Brown or Julie Booth and I'm the CFO of the company, I may have people running scenarios because I'm interested in those things through my purview, meaning their purview.

If I'm Tim Birkmeier, I may have people running different scenarios because of the things I'm focused on.

We -- we encourage people to help each other and support each other, but we didn't say this one area has the responsibility.

And I did not think to myself, I'm running this business because of a report that somebody, an -- an analyst, in -- in finance or

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accounting puts out about a future projection that, after 27 years of doing this, I know can't be relied upon.

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So I would not, you know, make them responsible, I guess, because -- because looking forward was very challenging in this business.

- Q. So are you saying that you wouldn't rely upon internal forecasts from the finance team when they were forecasting out how the business was going to do from one quarter to the next?
- A. Thank you for asking a clarifying question. I appreciate it.

I did work with the finance team specifically around earnings calls when we knew one quarter was done and we had good visibility into that next quarter.

Outside of that, if the finance team or others were doing longer term forecasts, they may share them with me, they may give me their opinions on them, but we didn't -- or I did not anchor to those things because of the -- all of the various reasons I've brought up just finding that not to be reliable in terms of -- and actually could be a distraction.

If you're -- if you have confidence in

A. I really didn't rely on forecasts for the full year. Again, and I'm not saying other people in finance or accounting didn't run scenarios to think about or pressure test the spending of the organization versus what different scenarios might occur.

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But I did not feel it was relevant to me to look at these long-term forecasts, again, because my experience told me that it's anybody's guess as to what will happen.

- 11 Q. Could you go to the second page of the email?
- 12 A. The back side here?
- 13 O. Yes.
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. Do you know what this is?
 - A. Well, there are four or five different, you know, categories here. Is there a particular one you're -- when you say that?
 - Q. I guess I'm asking: Do you know what this daily hedge desk report is?
 - A. Like we talked about before, I think this is a report that the hedge desk created. And I think it's really meant for the capital markets team. I know that they included some other people on this. But, you know, like, the hedge position

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your strategies, but you choose to look at someone's forecast 60 days out, you may stop a very important initiative that could harm the business.

So I think focus on what you know, and don't focus on things that you can't control.

- Q. So would you rely upon Julie Booth to update you as to potential forecasts for the company quarter to quarter?
- A. And, again, when you say "quarter to quarter," my interpretation is we're in one quarter, and she is talking to me about that quarter and the next quarter --
- Q. That's right.
 - A. -- right?

And, again, because that's in a tight time frame where you have more understanding, Julie may give me her thoughts, suggestions, concerns. She may say, you know, maybe we should take a look at spending over here because of this.

So, yes, I -- I relied on her to give me some of that information because she was closer to some of those things than I was.

Q. Would you rely upon Julie Booth to update you as to potential forecasts for the company for the full year?

Page 164

- or the risk limits or so forth, I -- I wouldn't 2 know what to do with that information.
 - Q. So you weren't really involved in preparing this report, correct?
 - A. It should say who -- it looks like it's been cut off, but usually on our reports, we would put who prepared the report. I don't believe I prepared this report.
 - Q. And did you review this report when you received
- 11 A. Like I said, this is not a report that I spent time 12 looking at.
 - Q. Is there anything on this -- the attachment, the daily hedge desk report, that you would have looked at?
 - A. Maybe let me clarify. What I've looked at in another way or on this report?
 - Q. Is there -- let me ask it a different way. Is there any metric on this report that you would have thought is important?
 - A. I don't want to -- I don't want to dismiss -- these may all be very important for the person doing their job.

County -- counterparty exposure seems very important. Those are big numbers. But I -- I

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Page	165

personally would not have looked at that and thought about that because I had Bob Walters and Bill Banfield were very -- this is how they came up in the -- you know, so they understood much better than I did what to do here.

So I would say I'm sure those are important to the company but not something I need to be getting myself involved with.

Q. Would Bob Banfield -- I'm sorry -- strike that.

Would Bob Walter (sic) or Bill Banfield

update you generally as to what was going on with
the hedge desk at Rocket?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form.

A. So the way that -- well, you -- in the beginning, we were kind of going through my career at the company. And you could probably tell I -- I spent my time on the marketing and -- and sales sides.

Bob Walters spent his time on the capital markets' side.

And I think Dan's thought was I've got two people who have very different skills but very complimentary skills. And I -- and I think Bob started within a year of when I began working with the organization, and he had been doing this that entire time. And Bill Banfield came right after.

ne questions would be They would share

Page 167

- thought the questions would be. They would share with me some of the responses they thought were appropriate, making sure that everyone agreed. I would review those things and either say, yeah, this makes sense to me based on what I know. Or if there was something I had a question about, I would ask that question. And then I would go to the conference.
- Q. Do you recall telling a Morgan Stanley analyst at that conference that all of Rockets' channels were growing?
- A. That does sound familiar to me. I believe I looked at some information provided by the team that had looked at 2020. And, again, there's a document somewhere, I'm sure, that speaks to this, but that we had grown in direct-to-consumer from 2019 to 2020. We had grown in wholesale from 2019 to 2020. Grown in all the partner channels. And so I think that was accurate information provided to me, and so I relayed that when that question was asked.
 - ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Derick, could you introduce Tab 38 as Farner 6.

Page 166

So there were some areas, like marketing where I had spent a lot of my time, and I probably got more involved. This is an area that I did not get involved with. I didn't get updates from. I had a lot of confidence that Bill and Bob had it figured out, and if there was some emergency or something, they would reach out to me and say, hey. Otherwise, they -- they had it. I just didn't need to check in.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. Okay. I'm going to move on to the Morgan Stanley TMT Conference on March 3rd. Do you recall attending that conference?
- A. I did attend the Morgan Stanley conference. I think this particular conference was virtual, if I remember correctly. And I knew it was sometime, I think, right after the earnings call.
- Q. What did you do to prepare for this conference?
- A. I'll speak in broader terms of what I would do to prepare because I can't remember the specifics for this exact conference. But typically for something like this, I would meet with PR/IR. In many cases, Tina John, who's a deputy counsel, would be involved.

PR would kind of update me on what they

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MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION:
DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 6
Exchange with James Eugene Faucette
2:26 p.m.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. So, Mr. Farner, you've just been handed a document marked Farner 6. If you could review it and let me know when you're ready.
- A. Okay.

Q. Okay.

Look -- I'm -- I'm going to keep reading. It looks like something is missing here in this -- James introduces me, and then he says he is going to read some important disclosures, but I don't see the disclosure in the -- or maybe just go to the thing. Maybe he doesn't read them there. Okay.

- Q. Okay. So if you turn to page 10, towards the bottom of the page, can you read the exchange between you and James Eugene Faucette?
- A. "We have five or six minutes left. I went to hit on a couple of points" --
- 22 Q. Oh, I don't mean you need to read it out loud --
- 23 A. Oh, sorry.
 - Q. -- could you read it to yourself? That's okay.
- 25 A. Sure.

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if all the channels were growing in the first

Page 171

Page 172

- You want me to move all the way to the 1 2 next page? 3
 - Q. Yes.
- 4 A. Okay.

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Q. Do you see the last paragraph of your response: "So I know we don't break down the percentages, and I'm probably not going to go any further than what we've already laid out in our earnings call, but as you can probably sense from my passion, they're all growing. And with about less than 10 percent market share, wherever we are, it's hard to say today. If you think about all those different channels that can grow and give us reach, that's why we get excited about what the company looks like in the years to come."

So is that the statement that you recall telling a Morgan Stanley analyst at this conference that all Rocket channels were growing?

A. I'm, again, going to assume, based on this transcript, that these are the things that I said. I can't remember everything I've said.

But my understanding, and I think as I read through my response here, the -- looking at each one of these -- this was in 2021. Looking at each one of those channels in 2017, 2018, 2019,

quarter of 2021?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form.

A. Absolutely not. And that would not be an accurate way to look at it. As I just mentioned, some of these channels you can do initiatives in weeks or months and get growth. Others take longer strategies.

And so I wouldn't look at them over one quarter. And I certainly wouldn't look at them over Q1 because, as we already discussed, the seasonality of the mortgage industry would mean that there are bumps as you get through December into January, as people aren't listing their homes or selling their homes. So it would not be fair for me to compare.

What's a better comparison is that '17, '18, '19, '20, consistent year over year, which gives the time for those strategies to work.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. Do you see in the question that James asks you in this second paragraph: "Can you talk a little bit about what portion each of those types of channels or processes are of the overall volume and business today?"

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2020, they were all growing. And as I pointed out, because we had -- and I say it's hard to know because some of the market share data comes out a little later after the loans close and get sold, but because we were roughly around 10 percent market share, that represented 90 percent of the mortgage market that -- that weren't our clients.

And so through all of these different channels, we had the ability to engage and reach these clients. And so, as I say, they -- "all of these different channels that can grow and give us reach, that's why we're excited about what this company looks like in the years to come."

I understand that each and every month, that I think most people do, these analysts here, there are ups and downs at all businesses. You're not going to have a consistent hockey stick, but over the course of time, and as we demonstrated from '17 to '18 to '19 to '20, over the course of time, we had the strategies to continue to grow these channels. And, again, according to the data that I was provided, and I have no reason not to believe it, it seemed very accurate based on how we were growing, that all those channels were growing.

Q. Did you look at actual quarter-to-date data to see

Do you see that?

- A. And as I said to Jimmy, I said: "It'd be confusing to try to understand all the different ways."
 - So then I went in and explained what I was talking about, which is the long-term strategies, and that's why I said, "in the years to
- Q. Where did you say in your response that you were only looking at 2017, 2018, 2019, or 2020?
- A. As you look through my response and you read my explanation of these things, I believe it's very obvious to the listener that these are long-term strategies.

As I talk about signing long-term deals, as I talk about building one of largest brands in the -- in the mortgage space and beyond, as I talk about here the last 12 months up above in the statement. I talk about 35 years. I'm -- I'm conveying that this -- these are longer term thoughts that I'm discussing, not short run daily or weekly or quarterly thoughts.

- Q. But you didn't tell James Faucette that you were just talking about numbers through 4Q 2020, right?
- A. I felt no reason to tell him that because the interview and the questions and my role at the

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should not be the CEO if I'm making decisions based

company is about the strategic growth of the organization.

Q. In the last paragraph of your response, you say: "So I know we don't break down the percentages, and I'm probably not going to go any further than what we've already laid out on our earnings call, but as you can probably sense from my passion, they're all growing."

What did you lay out in your earnings call for Q1 2021 about the channels growing?

- A. I'd have to go back and look at that. What I think I'm referencing here is that we speak to direct consumers and third parties. We don't break down Schwab versus wholesale versus State Farm.
- Q. So based on your testimony today, you don't think this analyst, based on your statement about what you've already laid out in the earnings call for 1Q 2021, believed you were talking about the channels arowina in 2021?
- A. No, ma'am --

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection. So sorry. Objection, form.

23 A. No, ma'am.

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- 24 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
- 25 Q. So why did you say: "So I know we don't break down

on what's happened in 30 or 60 or 90 days, because many of these channels don't operate that way.

Signing up a company like State Farm to have their real estate or their insurance agents do mortgages is a long-term process. They could be growing.

In fact, if we went back and looked, there might be more agents joining the platform, growing. There might be more insurance agents, growing. I don't define what I mean by growing because it takes a while.

So I would not look at a short-run period to define all of those partnerships in that

- Q. Did you tell James Eugene Faucette that you were not referring to the overall volume in business today, which was his question?
- A. I believe I understood his question as being, hey, we're here today. I did not view his question as, tell me about the exact loan business and volume happening on March 3rd. I wouldn't even know what loan volume was happening on March 3rd. I was at a conference.

So I did not interpret it as being that

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the percentages, and I'm probably not going to go any further than what we've already laid out in our earnings call"?

A. Because he had asked me a guestion about the different breakdown of the channels, and we had talked about in multiple earnings calls that we weren't going to break down the channels. So I was simply saying I'm not going to give more definition to each individual channel because we don't do that in the earnings calls.

I wasn't even ref- -- referencing, I don't believe, the specific earnings call. I'm referencing that the way we convey the information to the public doesn't give specific percentages by each partnership.

Q. So the rest of that sentence reads: "As you can probably sense from my passion, they're all growing."

So you were not referring to Q1 at that point?

- A. No, ma'am.
 - Q. And did you know that in Q1 they were actually not all growing?
 - A. The information and data I looked at had been year over year. But as I said before, that would -- I

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- day. I just interpreted it as kind of the general way human beings talk to each other. And, of course, as a CEO of a large company, I'm going to speak about the -- the long-term view of our -- our company, not that particular day.
- Q. When you reviewed -- strike that.

As the CEO of the company, did you review any reports that indicated that for Q1 the channels weren't growing?

A. The mortgage business is a cyclical business, so whether you're an analyst or the leader of a mortgage company, you wouldn't look at what occurred in the first quarter of a year and use that to determine whether anything was growing or shrinking. You're coming off the holidays, so I would not have reviewed something.

And if someone said to me, hey, look, it looks like this channel is shrinking right now over the last two or three weeks, I would not have thought, wow, that means it's shrinking. I would have thought to myself, wow, some insurance agents took some time off for the holidays, and real estate agents don't do a lot of listings in January or February, but the normal cycles of business will operate like they typically do.

Pages 173 to 176

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1 information that I thought was relevant. And as 2 I've explained, in terms of the seasonality and the 3 gestation or the cycle time of some of these 4 partnerships, I -- I cannot see someone relying on 5 that and using it to make an educated judgment

about the future value of the company. 7 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

> Q. So when James Eugene Faucette said: "Can you talk a little bit about what portions each of those types of channels or processes are of the overall volume in business today," you understood him to be limiting his question to what happened in 4Q 2020?

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Page 180

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to the form, asked and answered a few times now.

But you -- you can answer again.

A. Yeah, I didn't say that. I understood him to ask about our business. And when he uses the word "today," kind of like, hey, we're here today, we're sitting here today, tell me about the business.

I didn't understand it to tell me about the business of what happened today on March 3rd, and I certainly didn't think he was just referencing Q4. I -- I thought he was asking me a general question about our business and what's happening with -- with it, you know.

estate agents getting signed up that that channel will continue to grow. And, again, I don't have all the

And I'm looking over the long term, and

have every reason to believe, based on more

insurance agents getting signed up, more real

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breakdowns for you, but I can tell you the company did grow in 2021, and did more loan volume than it had done in 2020.

Q. So are you testifying that it wouldn't have mattered whether the channels were not growing in Q1 at this time to this analyst?

> ATTORNEY SCOTT: Come on. Objection. You can answer, if you understand it.

A. I can't tell you what would matter to this analyst. I can tell you that we didn't tell analysts or anyone else what was specifically happening in each one of these channels.

My interaction with analysts in the past had taught me that they also understood the cyclical nature of the business.

So my educated guess would be that Jim would also think to himself, well, that's not a data point to focus on, because it's the early part of the year.

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1 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 2 3

But, again, I -- I don't know. I didn't think that was relevant. I feel like four or five years of history was something hard, like standing up these channels, was the relevant data to look at.

Q. Do you think that the market would have been interested to know that, in Q1, the channels were not growing?

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form.

A. I don't know what the market would be interested in. I have seen situations where I thought the market was going to be disappointed about something, and they were incredibly excited.

I've seen situations -- I can think back to the Q3, where I thought the market would be incredibly excited about something, and they were disappointed.

I remember reading something from an analyst saying that they were still trying to figure out our company because it looked different. They couldn't figure out FinTech, mortgage, how does this all work together. So I wouldn't know how they would have felt about it.

But I have to stress, we only reported

Q. Did you think he wanted to know what was happening in the business in Q1 2021?

A. I don't see anything here that would have led me -led me to believe that that was his specific question either.

Q. So you didn't include an answer about Q1 2021; is that right?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form, asked and answered.

A. I did my best to try to understand Jim's question. My interpretation is that it was about the, hey, tell me about these broad strategies of the business and why you're excited about the opportunity to grow market share. And I responded. I didn't put a -- a date range. And I didn't understand him to be putting a date range on it.

18 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

> Q. But you chose not to talk about what was happening in Q1 at that time, right?

> > ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

A. If we -- if we go through here, I'm talking about the E*TRADE website.

I'm talking about Charles Schwab and their advisors.

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	Page 181		Page 183
1	I'm talking about 30,000 real estate	1	then you can play that for Mr. Farner.
2	agents that have signed up to our Insight platform.	2	ATTORNEY SCOTT: What what am I
3	I'm talking about the Pro Network that's	3	doing?
4	been growing in the past 12 months.	4	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: So you are going to
5	I'm talking about the State Farm agents	5	the eighth document, which is the native of
6	getting getting licensed in all 50 states.	6	Exhibit 7.
7	So then I probably couldn't tell you the	7	ATTORNEY SCOTT: Oh, okay. Oh, I see
8	exact timing of each one of those things when it	8	what you're saying. Normally we press play to play
9	was happening or going to happen. Today, I I	9	the video. There's no volume right now so
10	couldn't tell you.	10	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Oh.
11	I was speaking to the large large	11	ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'll no. No. I'll
12	initiatives that the company had that I thought	12	get it.
13	were relevant to the different types of channels	13	(Video playing.)
14	that we had. Wasn't time boxing them, nor did I	14	BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
15	interpret the question to to be that way.	15	Q. Mr. Farner, was that you speaking on the Fox
16	So I wasn't not talking about it. I	16	Business interview?
17	wasn't wasn't I I and I probably can	17	A. Yes, ma'am.
18	impress I don't think about the business as I think	18	Q. So I want to focus on the part of the interview
19	about the strategies in a Q4 or a Q1, unless I'm	19	where you said, "So, really, interest rates moving
20	looking at a technology roadmap and wondering,	20	around are a great benefit to us."
21	okay, are we going to get that built in that time	21	A. Can Can I get a copy of whatever you're looking
22	frame.	22	at that shows the transcripts of the interview?
23	Q. Do you remember if you received a document via	23	Q. I don't have a transcript of the interview. I'm
24	email to prepare you for this conference?	24	happy to show you a Complaint which excerpts the
25	A. I I think we had talked about kind of the	25	whole section.
	Page 182		Page 184
1	_	1	
1 2	Page 182 general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR	1 2	Page 184 Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content,
	general preparation for things like this. I		Would you like to see that?
2	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR	2	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content,
2 3	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR team some ideas of what he wanted to discuss. And	2 3	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content, and it as I said to you before, I I think
2 3 4	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR team some ideas of what he wanted to discuss. And I believe they would have reviewed that with me,	2 3 4	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content, and it as I said to you before, I I think it's very dangerous to lift a few words out of a
2 3 4 5	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR team some ideas of what he wanted to discuss. And I believe they would have reviewed that with me, which informs my my comments.	2 3 4 5	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content, and it as I said to you before, I I think it's very dangerous to lift a few words out of a out of an interview.
2 3 4 5 6	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR team some ideas of what he wanted to discuss. And I believe they would have reviewed that with me, which informs my my comments. I don't know if that was an email sent	2 3 4 5 6	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content, and it as I said to you before, I I think it's very dangerous to lift a few words out of a out of an interview. But without me being able to see all of
2 3 4 5 6 7	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR team some ideas of what he wanted to discuss. And I believe they would have reviewed that with me, which informs my my comments. I don't know if that was an email sent to me or whether I met with someone in person and	2 3 4 5 6 7	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content, and it as I said to you before, I I think it's very dangerous to lift a few words out of a out of an interview. But without me being able to see all of the content, it doesn't feel quite fair.
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR team some ideas of what he wanted to discuss. And I believe they would have reviewed that with me, which informs my my comments. I don't know if that was an email sent to me or whether I met with someone in person and they reviewed it. I I couldn't tell you the way	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content, and it as I said to you before, I I think it's very dangerous to lift a few words out of a out of an interview. But without me being able to see all of the content, it doesn't feel quite fair. Q. We can introduce a copy of the Complaint.
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR team some ideas of what he wanted to discuss. And I believe they would have reviewed that with me, which informs my my comments. I don't know if that was an email sent to me or whether I met with someone in person and they reviewed it. I I couldn't tell you the way I I was you know, the delivery mechanism.	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content, and it as I said to you before, I I think it's very dangerous to lift a few words out of a out of an interview. But without me being able to see all of the content, it doesn't feel quite fair. Q. We can introduce a copy of the Complaint. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: David, if you want
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	general preparation for things like this. I believe that James would have given the PR or IR team some ideas of what he wanted to discuss. And I believe they would have reviewed that with me, which informs my my comments. I don't know if that was an email sent to me or whether I met with someone in person and they reviewed it. I I couldn't tell you the way I I was you know, the delivery mechanism. Q. So we're going to move on to the Fox Business	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Would you like to see that? A. I just think the interview has a lot of content, and it as I said to you before, I I think it's very dangerous to lift a few words out of a out of an interview. But without me being able to see all of the content, it doesn't feel quite fair. Q. We can introduce a copy of the Complaint. ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: David, if you want to grab that.
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ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Yeah.

You should see it up there, Jeff, and

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1 ATTORNEY SCOTT: -- I think, yeah. 2 ATTORNEY CIVIDINI: I had it as 7. 3 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: I thought the slip 4 sheet was 7 and --5 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Yeah, Farner 7 is the 6 slip sheet. Farner 8 was the video. And then 7 Farner 9, I think, is the Complaint, right? It's 8 showing up as Document 9. Or am I wrong about 9 this? You -- you tell me. 10 ATTORNEY CIVIDINI: No, I didn't mark 11 the video. 12 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Oh, okay. 13 ATTORNEY CIVIDINI: I just marked the 14 slip sheet to keep the Bates number -- you know, the slip sheet has the Bates number for the video. 15 16 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Got it. Okay. So this 17 is 8 then. Thank you. 18 Here you go. 19 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 20 Q. So the excerpt that I'm referring to is on pages 21 102 and 103 of that document. And if you want to

listen to the earlier part of the interview again,

A. Maybe if you ask me the question, and if I have

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Just play it again.

we can do that.

so the supply side decreases, which allows us to gain market share.

Number two, a competitor that is less efficient can't spend the same marketing dollar because they don't earn -- they're not -- they spend more in marketing, their cost to acquire is higher, and so they back away from the marketing before we do. So now, typically, I'm now taking real estate, in particular online real estate that they were competing with me, so now I'm more present there.

You know, I could go on. I'm going to lose my train of thought here.

But the -- yeah, my -- my experience is that it just weeds out a lot of the competitors.

And then the other side of it, especially because we're the servicer, you're bringing in clients -- today, the company is bringing in clients with a rate of 6 percent, 7 percent. Those are all now clients that the minute the rates drop, a 1/4, 3/8, 1/2 percent, we -- we can help get a lower interest rate. And there's no marketing cost attached to that.

And so even if you said to yourself, hey, we're going to do the first loan and the

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           recollection, great, and if not --
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        BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
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        Q. Sure.
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        A. -- we can go back to it.
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                  So I'm -- I'm on 102 here. Okay. 237?
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        Q. Yes. And 238.
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        A. Okav.
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        Q. So my question for you is about a part of the
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           statement where you say: "So, really, interest
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rates moving around are a great benefit to us."

What did you rely upon in making that statement?

A. My experience. I had lived through it multiple times at the company. I think earlier in -- in the day I kind of referenced that, whether it was a financial crisis in the late '90s which caused interest rates to move around; you know, the Great Recession, which caused a lot of our competitors, banks included, to get away from the business; the pandemic.

And I -- if we had Bill Banfield here, he could show you graph after graph of that movement in interest rate will usually do a few things. Number one, a competitor that's less capitalized will back away from the business. And gain-on-sale margin is 60 basis points lower than it was a -- 6 months ago, 12 months ago, a month ago, in the grand scheme of life, you still want to do that loan, because you're now going to refinance that client again. And the 2,000, 3,000, \$5,000 in marketing cost is gone. And it doubles or -- if you were to add the savings in marketing cost to the gain-on-sale margin, now it's, like, north of

So you're looking at the lifetime value of the client, and -- and you can see, wow, I -- so that's my experience over a period of time. Now, some of these periods take longer than others. This was an interesting situation during the pandemic. The amount of Fed cuts, the amount of Fed increases -- and I'm not there at the company now, so I can't speak to. But -- but my living it over almost three decades was that's when you have to lean in, that's when you have to invest, that's when you have to grow market share. And every single time we were able to grow the company through those -- through those cycles.

Q. Do you remember when we looked at the 4Q earnings call transcript from February 25th, 2021, and we read a sentence where you said, "So I guess you can

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tell we're pretty excited about it and don't see interest rates having an impact on our business one way or the other."

Do you remember that statement?

- A. I remember us talking about that. And I think I remember us having the same type of conversation we're having right now, which is that long view and our opportunity to grow market share is how I think about the business.
- Q. So is it that the interest rates weren't going to have an impact on the business one way or the other, or is it that the interest rates would be a great benefit to Rocket?
- A. Well, I'd have to go back and read the rest of that sentence that we discussed, because I'm not certain if I'm referencing one way or the other as in the interest rates moving down one way or the other. Because, in general, you can tell my -- my firm belief is that the movement of those interest rates allows us to lean in.

When the interest rates dip down, our efficiency as a company, as demonstrated in March and April of 2020, we grew faster than anyone else could grow because of the operational and marketing efficiency that we have.

don't see interest rates rising or falling having an impact on your business? Is that what you mean?

A. Yes, that's kind of what we've been talking about all the time, which is the movement of the interest rates, typically, my experience has been is always a benefit to our business.

We -- when the rates go up, we're able to take advantage of -- and I just talked a lot about those things. I don't want to do it again. But take advantage of that opportunity. And if rates go down, you know, then we can lean in and take advantage of the opportunity.

That's my -- again, this is back a few years. But I'm trying to use my best judgment based on who I know I am and how I thought about the business at that time.

Q. I guess my question is more it appears that in February 25th, 2021, you're saying that interest rates going up and down are not going to have an impact on the business, but here during the Fox Business interview, you said interest rates moving around are great for the business, a great benefit for the business.

So can you explain that?

A. Sure. I think everything's got to be put in

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So -- so I -- I would think -- again, I'd have to go back and look. When I -- when I say "one way or the other," I'm -- I'm talking about the interest rate movement one way or the other.

ATTORNEY SCOTT: She's referring to just, for the record, Exhibit 3.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. You can spend some time looking at Exhibit 3, Mr. Farner. Do you want to refresh your --
- A. Okay. Thank you.
- Q. -- recollection as to the statement?
- A. Yeah. I mean, right here I say, "interest rates going up or down." Probably could have articulated it cleaner. But I believe I'm -- it's one way or the other I'm referring back to my statement about interest rates going -- going down.
 - Q. So I guess I just want to understand that. The -the statement is: So I guess you can tell we're pretty excited about it, and don't see interest rates having an impact on our business one way or the other.
- A. Yes. I mean, the interest rates one way or the other. That's how I'm reading this today.
- Q. So -- so is what you're saying that you -- in this statement that you made on February 25th, that you

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context. So if you go through and look at all the discussions we're having about the channels, the partnerships, the opportunities, I think, in this particular case -- and maybe it was the way the question was -- was asked. It says here: "I think you know there was a competitor in the partner segment talking about exiting parts of the market."

"And if we do continue to see rates going up, like where do you inevitably see margins?"

So I think the way this question was framed up, as me sitting here right at that point in time, I viewed it as, hey, there's a -- this person's asking me more about the concern to the business. And so my response is explaining all the things we're doing with the business. And so that's probably why I used this phrase "impacting" because I'm addressing his concern.

Over here, I'm talking more broadly about the long-term excitement that I have experienced over years when we've leaned in and executed as rates have moved around. I think very, very similar, maybe a slight difference in the choice of words.

Q. So just to finish reading that portion, which you

Pages 189 to 192

Page 193 Page 195 1 1 can follow along in the complaint, if you'd like. Q. Did you think that interest rates moving around 2 A. Oh, okay. 2 were going to be a great benefit for Rocket's 3 Q. So are you with me? "So, really," I'm going to 3 revenues for the whole of 2021? 4 start there. 4 A. Yeah. I don't see that I'm specifically speaking 5 5 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Start where? to revenue here. I see that I'm talking about our 6 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 6 clients in the lifetime value of clients as it 7 Q. So "so really" is where I'm starting in the 7 grows for us in the sentence above. 8 8 complaint. I think it's paragraph 238. And so that -- again, you probably can 9 9 A. Yes, I see it. tell my mindset, as we've talked all day, that 10 Q. "So, really, interest rates moving around are a 10 that's really what I've experienced over my long 11 11 great benefit to us. And then, of course, when term at the company, was acquire the clients, make 12 they drop back down, we've got a 90 percent 12 them happy, and over the long run, you will do far 13 13 retention rate on our servicing book; we'll help better than your competition. 14 those clients refinance their mortgages and save 14 Q. Did you think that interest rates moving around 15 money. So, you know, cycles are good, at least for 15 would be a great benefit for Rocket in terms of 16 16 our business in the mortgage industry, and I think volume for the second quarter of 2021? 17 17 that's what we're going to see here this year." A. Again, I would not be thinking about that in a 18 18 Do you see that? quarter-to-quarter situation. To recognize the 19 A. Yes, ma'am. 19 lifetime value of a client, it takes year -- it 20 Q. So did you think that interest rates moving around 20 takes a year or years to do so. So my mindset is 21 would be a great benefit to Rocket that year, in 21 more of that -- you know, that -- that -- as the 22 22 clients increase -- the revenue is there for you, 2021? 23 23 A. I thought that the interest rate movement would it's in your servicing book, and it's just a matter 24 allow us to execute and maybe take advantage of the 24 of time that you'll be able to extract it. 25 different opportunities we had that others didn't 25 But it -- I did not think it was wise to Page 194 Page 196 1 try to measure that and make business decisions 1 have and grow market share. And, again, I think 2 2 that's exactly what happened in 2021. I think our around, you know, arbitrary, like, a quarter, three 3 3 -- it was -- it was a record year. months, whatever. 4 Q. Did you think that interest rates were going to be 4 Q. Did you think interest rates moving around would be 5 5 a great benefit to Rocket in terms of volume for a great benefit for Rocket -- for Rocket's revenue 6 6 for the second quarter of 2021? the whole of 2021? 7 7

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A. I wouldn't have been thinking about a particular quarter. I think I've expressed that multiple times now. I'm thinking about the overall growth of the business.

And as you can tell here, I'm really thinking about client acquisition and market share. That's why I'm referencing the retention rate on the servicing book because -- and I think we've discussed this as well -- bringing those clients in now allows us to benefit later when we refinance them. So getting fixated on a quarter's revenue would -- could cause you to make mistakes that could harm the business in the long run.

Q. Did you think that interest rates going -- moving around would be a great benefit for Rocket for the full year of 2021?

Sorry. Let -- let me rephrase that question.

A. Okay.

- A. Again, the '21 -- 2021 was a great year. As I've just explained, as I'm thinking about the lifetime value of a client with a new mortgage, title, perhaps an auto loan or a personal loan, I tended not to time box that and, instead, kind of thought if you build it, they will come.
- Q. Did you think that interest rates moving around would be a great benefit to Rocket in terms of gain-on-sale margin for the second quarter?
- A. When is this interview?

 $\label{eq:attorney} \begin{array}{ll} \text{ATTORNEY SCOTT: } & \text{What's the date of it?} \\ \text{THE WITNESS: Yeah.} \end{array}$

ATTORNEY SCOTT: It's March 11th.

- A. Yeah, I would have no idea what interest rates would be in the second quarter.
- BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. There was no internal forecast as to what you believed gain-on-sale margin would be at this time for the -- for the second quarter?

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I wouldn't -- I wouldn't think about interest rate movement in the context of

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2 interest rate movement in the context of 3 gain-on-sale margin.
4 I would think about interest rate

movement in the context of marketing opportunity, competition falling away, clients needing something either way, a client that was going to buy a home, now maybe can't afford it, but now wants to put an addition on their existing home, and maybe it creates a cash-out transaction. Rates go down, a client who needs to save money or consolidate debt does so, but not in a -- as I said before, I would find it hard to forecast gain-on-sale margin 60 or 90 days ahead. So thinking about it or thinking that it would have an impact all throughout the year would not be something that I would be thinking about.

- Q. Would you have trouble forecasting gain-on-sale margin 30 days ahead?
- Well, we -- when we reported numbers, we reported quarterly. And, again, the quarter was usually 50 or 60 percent of the way baked.

So when we were looking 30 days ahead and we had the uncertainty of what they -- what that would be, we also, though, knew what the first

Q. How many days were left in the quarter on March 11, 2021?

A. As I've said before, there may be people putting

But my experience has told me that I

can't predict -- no one can predict what's going to

forecasts together for planning purposes.

- A. Business days? I would have to get a calendar.
- 8 A. Busine9 Q. Yeah.

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- 10 A. 15 or so. 20.
- Q. So by March 11, 2021, you didn't have a good idea as to what the gain-on-sale margin would be for the second quarter --
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. -- sorry -- for the first quarter?
- 16 A. Sure, for the first quarter, yes. We had 17 already --

happen 30, 60, 90 days out.

18 ATTORNEY SCOTT: You had asked about the second quarter.

A. We had already reported that to the --

 $\label{eq:attorney} \mbox{ATTORNEY SCOTT: You had asked about the second quarter.}$

23 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Right.

24 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. So for -- so as of March 11, 2021, you had no idea

Page 198

- 1 60 had been, so I think it gave us enough 2 confidence to report that -- that next quarter
 - gain-on-sale margin, because two-thirds of that
 data was known.
 Q. So my question was a little bit different.
 - Q. So my question was a little bit different.

 Would -- would you be able to, based on
 past numbers, forecast gain-on-sale margin 30 days
 ahead?
 - A. I don't know what the past gain-on-sale margin would have to do -- again, from a forecast -- let's try to clarify your question.

Would someone somewhere on a piece of paper be doing these things? I'm sure they were. I think you showed me a Compass report where they were doing that.

Would I use that forecast to make some sort of business decision? I would not, because my experience is people would look at, you know, five days of gain-on-sale margin, and then they might take a MBA forecast or something of that nature, which is just -- I'll use it again.

I can recall Jamie Dimon up on the television screen over and over talking about how we're going to have a recession in 2023. I can't think of another human being in the world that

how Rocket was going to do in terms of gain-on-sale

- margin for the second quarter?

 A. Yeah, again, you're talking about April, May, and
- A. Yean, again, you're talking about April, May, and June. I do not know how to predict in March what will be happening with Treasuries and mortgage-backed securities in June.
- Q. But Rocket was forecasting internally how it believed it might do in the second quarter, correct?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

A. Yeah, we -- we've talked about this, too. You -- you keep saying "forecasting." Someone may have been putting numbers down on a piece of paper.

But as I have touched on many times, better to stick with the long-term strategies that you've developed. And as long as you have a situation where you can continue to fund and do those things, not get stuck in the day-to-day of margin or interest rate fluctuation.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. Did you think interest rates moving around would be a great benefit for Rocket in terms of gain-on-sale margin for the whole year of 2021?
 - A. I thought you asked this question before. I'll answer it again.

Pages 197 to 200

	Page 201		Page 203
1	would have more data and information than this guy,	1	business?
2	yet it didn't happen.	2	A. Well well, two of the components of revenue are
3	So to to to believe that you could	3	the first question you asked me and the second
4	accurately predict what the ten-year Treasury is	4	question you asked me, and so my response will be
5	going to do, China is going to decide to do	5	the same in terms of how she would use it and what
6	something, not buy, buy. The feds are going to	6	she would use it for.
7	start buying the mortgage-backed securities or not	7	ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Do you want to take
8	buying the mortgage-backed securities. There's	8	a short break? We can keep going if you want.
9	going to be a war somewhere.	9	ATTORNEY SCOTT: I think we should.
10	There are so many things that are well	10	It's been an hour and a half.
11	outside of our company's control, that to to	11	VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Off the record at
12	think about using that, from a business	12	3:25.
13	perspective, was not something that I was	13	(Off the record at 3:25 p.m.)
14	interested in doing.	14	(Back on the record at 3:42 p.m.)
15	Q. Do you know if Julie Booth used financial forecasts	15	VIDEO TECHNICIAN: We are back on the
16	to make decisions about Rocket's business?	16	record at 3:42.
17	A. Well, Julie Booth, the CFO, would be more	17	BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
18	responsible for alerting certain areas of our	18	Q. Mr. Farner, I want to switch to talking about the
19	business about their expenses.	19	UWM ultimatum in 2021.
20	And so she might be using these	20	Do you know what that was?
21	different scenarios or sensitivities just to keep	21	A. I do.
22	an eye. I'll give you an example.	22	Q. Can you tell me what that was?
23	We were in many buildings. She might go	23	A. It was a period of time where one of our
24	to Mike Malloy and say, This is kind of where we	24	competitors in the wholesale space told mortgage
25	could come in. This is a range of where we could	25	so mortgage broker we've talked about this
	Page 202		Page 204
1	_	1	_
1 2	come in. We should consider that when taking a new	1 2	before. Mortgage brokers, traditionally, they
1 2 3	_	1 2 3	before. Mortgage brokers, traditionally, they choose from a multitude of lenders to for the
2	come in. We should consider that when taking a new seven-year lease in a building or something of that nature.	2	before. Mortgage brokers, traditionally, they choose from a multitude of lenders to for the for the loan programs.
2	come in. We should consider that when taking a new seven-year lease in a building or something of that nature. So I think it may have benefitted Julie	2 3	before. Mortgage brokers, traditionally, they choose from a multitude of lenders to for the for the loan programs. The two probably strongest players in
2 3 4	come in. We should consider that when taking a new seven-year lease in a building or something of that nature. So I think it may have benefitted Julie to try to have a variety of scenarios as we thought	2 3 4	before. Mortgage brokers, traditionally, they choose from a multitude of lenders to for the for the loan programs. The two probably strongest players in the space, Rocket and Shore, or UWM.
2 3 4 5	come in. We should consider that when taking a new seven-year lease in a building or something of that nature. So I think it may have benefitted Julie to try to have a variety of scenarios as we thought about spending, but not as we thought about the	2 3 4 5	before. Mortgage brokers, traditionally, they choose from a multitude of lenders to for the for the loan programs. The two probably strongest players in the space, Rocket and Shore, or UWM. And so, at that point in time, the guy
2 3 4 5 6 7	come in. We should consider that when taking a new seven-year lease in a building or something of that nature. So I think it may have benefitted Julie to try to have a variety of scenarios as we thought about spending, but not as we thought about the marketing we're going to spend, the loans we're	2 3 4 5 6 7	before. Mortgage brokers, traditionally, they choose from a multitude of lenders to for the for the loan programs. The two probably strongest players in the space, Rocket and Shore, or UWM. And so, at that point in time, the guy running Shore came out and said, you can't work
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agreement to when they would go on his website to

register a loan. They had to acknowledge that they

of later than this time frame, I found out that he

And then, I think, at the very end, kind

look like so she could be informing the different

Q. Do you think Julie Booth would have used forecasts

for revenue to make business decisions for Rocket's

business areas; and, again, primarily on

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why not communicate? Look, if there's somebody who's talking about taking away the very thing that is beneficial to you, why don't we talk about the fact that we're not doing that, that we actually

5 are here to support you. So I think it created an 6 opportunity for us to maybe grow market share in 7 this space.

> And then, you know, this is a -- a local business, and over the course of time, this gentleman had to send his team members down to Detroit. They had distributed thousands and thousands of flyers on people's cars. Some team members, some -- and the wind came and now there's thousands of pieces of paper blowing around downtown Detroit.

And, you know, it said things -- I think there was a conference where he told people that Dan Gilbert was going to die after he had his stroke. There was another situation where a person who he supported through a company called AIME made really nasty comments about Austin Niemiec, who I said ran this business with his wife and Mat Ishbia.

So I would say there was an opportunity here, but it was also important because I don't

then went in and changed -- this is my understanding -- went in and changed the -- he had the -- you know him better than me, because unilateral right to change the loan sale agreement with brokers.

And he put in there that the very act of sending a loan to me is acknowledgement that you are going to be part of the ultimatum. I don't know if that's legal or not, but whatever.

And then he said if you -- if you -- if he found out that you sent a loan to him and to Rocket, he would fine you \$50,000. And I think it was \$50,000 per loan file. Again, it's been a few years, but that's my recollection.

So, obviously, it was an interesting decision, I suppose.

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Let's introduce Tab 9, Derick.

> MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION: **DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 9**

Tweet 3:45 p.m.

> ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: I have that as Farner 9. Can you confirm that, Derick?

> > ATTORNEY CIVIDINI: It's confirmed.

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ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Thanks.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. Have you had a chance to review the exhibit?
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- Q. Did you post this tweet about the UWM ultimatum?
- A. Yeah, it's on my Twitter account. I don't -- I wasn't the one that posted it, but knew -- knew of it, and I think someone in PR posted it for me.
- Q. And did you approve of the tweet being published in your name?
- 11 A. Yes.
 - O. Why did the UWM ultimatum matter to Rocket?
 - A. Well, probably a few -- a few reasons. And this goes back to even the discussions we were having about volatility in interest rates.

I try to think about every situation and how you can turn that into an opportunity. And so here was an opportunity presented to us where -where these brokers had to make a decision. And I think the thought process -- and, again, I -this -- okay. I think we touched on this as well. Bob Walters, Tim Birkmeier, and Austin Niemiec were kind of running the day-to-day on this business.

I got a little involved when this happened, more from a marketing perspective. And

- think we liked how -- how this person was, you know, conducting themselves.
- Q. Was there a concern that through the UWM ultimatum, UWM would take broker market share from you?
- A. I would say that in any business and in the broker side of the business, you're always trying to figure out if someone can take market share. It could through a new product. It could be through pricing. It could be through opening additional AEs. I mean, that's just part of business.

I think -- I think both. I think people thought, okay, well, it would be unfortunate if a bunch of brokers flipped, but it also created an opportunity.

And the other strange thing, to peel back the onion a little bit, a -- a broker or a brokerage shop, which what he was talking about, has three or four loan officers underneath it or maybe another one has five or ten, but there's a lot of them, 14-, 15,000 of these brokerage shops across America. The -- the loan officer, really dropped -- the loan officer is the one with the relationships. The loan officer knows the real estate agents. The loan officer brings in the business.

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So even though there's probably an initial concern, what was also discussed was if one of these brokerage shops decides to move only to UWM and exclude us, there is a high likelihood that the loan officers underneath who've been using Rocket will simply go to work at another.

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And so there's the short run enthused -not enthusiasm, discussion around this, but usually most things, you know, over the long run, it's going to kind of work itself out. So how do we in the short run use this as -- as an opportunity for us to grow.

Q. So I just want to read the first part of the tweet. It says: "Great news: Rocket Pro TPO has increased its market share in the weeks since UWM's ultimatum to brokers."

How did you know that Rocket Pro TPO had increased its market share in the weeks since UWM's ultimatum to brokers?

A. What had been shared with me, if I remember correctly, this was on the 17th of March. I don't know if that's Friday, a Saturday. I feel it was right around the day or after, whatever the -- he had given a deadline for the ultimatum.

And so we had looked at the registration

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- 1 if fewer brokers were going to be working with UWM, 2 then the opportunity for more brokers to work with 3 us was there, which would, of course, increase 4 our -- our market share.
 - Q. So when you wrote: "Rocket Pro TPO has increased its market share in the weeks since UWM's ultimatum to brokers," did you mean registrations or did you mean brokers or did you mean something else?
 - A. You know, again, going back a few years, what I'm sharing with you is the data that had been provided to me, that -- if I -- if I recall -- recall correctly, he had 4,000 or so brokers, but only 3,000 had signed up. So there were 1,000 new brokers who had been given -- who had been going to UWM who now were available. So I knew that there were, on the whole, more brokers for us to approach, and I knew that the registration number had gone up.

I can't tell you exactly -- you know, you asked me if I approved this tweet. In all likelihood, someone in PR wrote the tweet. I knew those two data points were accurate, so I approved the tweet.

- Q. Which two data points are you referring to?
- A. Thank you. The data point that 25 percent of the

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- number for that week between when he issued the ultimatum and when the deadline was. And Tim Birkmeier, whoever -- again, I couldn't say specifically who gave me the data. But people running the business gave me the data and said, "Registrations are up a lot."
- Q. What do you mean by "registrations"?
- A. Well, that's the first step in the loan process, so when a broker writes a loan for a client, they register it with us, and they lock the loan, and that's -- now we start working on the loan.
- Q. So did registrations mean that new brokers were working with you?
- A. It -- it could mean both. It could mean that existing brokers were increasing. It could mean that brokers that hadn't worked with -- worked with us in the past because the ultimatum switched over to us. And I suppose here, because "market share" is a pretty broad term, that could also be the market share of brokers.

Because in this business, the end result -- in this particular business, this wholesale business, the end result is the loan. But, really, what -- what our business is trying to -- you get the loan by getting the broker. So

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- brokers that had been with Shore, or UWM, had not agreed to the ultimatum and that the registration volume had been up that week.
 - Q. So were you assuming that the 25 percent that had not agreed to the ultimatum were going to come to Rocket?
 - A. I -- I -- it would be hard for me what I was assuming a few years ago. But I would say that the registration number that's a hard number, right? That's actual files coming in, which I think the number -- the increase from the week over the week is something like 40 percent.
- Q. And was that information provided to you in a
- A. I believe either Austin or Bob or Tim or a combination of them had shown me a report with those numbers.
 - Q. Do you know which one of them was tracking the registration metric?
- 20 A. I would think that they were all tracking or having 21 someone track it for them.
- Q. And where would they get information about the registration metric? Would it have been from the 24 BiGG repository?
 - A. Yeah, that could be one place for sure. Yeah.

Pages 209 to 212

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Q. Where else might they get information about reg--the registration metric?

A. There is another system. Let me think of it. For many years, it was called Lakewood. Now it's called -- shoot.

THE WITNESS: Shawn, I can't remember.

- A. Anyway it's a -- it's the system that actually does the loan origination.
 - BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
- 10 Q. Is this sometimes referred to as the "data lake"?
- 11 A. No.

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- 12 Q. Okay.
- A. If you ask somebody else what Lakewood currently is called -- it's just I'm having a -- maybe it will come to me in the next few minutes. Anyway, you could pull reports out of -- out of that system as well. It wasn't as common. But some of the -- like, somebody who's worked at the company for a long period of time may have -- may have pulled the
- 20 report from there as well, if they were looking at 21 it. I -- again, I -- I was shown the information. 22 I don't know how -- where -- where exactly they got
- Q. Would you be able to see the registration numbers in real time, or was there a delay between when

- A. Well, I would imagine Austin Niemiec. He did it every single day. So he would know if there was a -- a delay or not.
- Q. How do you know whether the registrations would actually close?
 - A. Only looking back at historical performance. And, again, I -- I wasn't that close to this particular business, but these gentlemen were. And so I think they had a pretty good, you know, feel -- remember, we were talking earlier about pull-through -- of what the pull-through was from a registration to a closed loan. And I don't remember anyone telling me that there was a significant change in -- in pull-through.
 - Q. Do you recall what the pull-through was from a registration to a closed loan during this point in time?
- 18 A. For -- for this wholesale business?
 - Q. Yes.
- 20 A. No.
 - Q. Is pull-through something that was tracked internally at Rocket for the wholesale business?
 - A. Excuse me.

I would think that Austin would have looked at that. He has what we called "AEs,"

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- someone would register and you would see that information?
- A. Is "you" me specifically?
- 4 Q. Yes.
 - A. If I -- let me think through this question.

I was not -- I don't think I was -- again, Bob and Austin and Tim, so I wasn't looking at the registrations on a regular basis. I probably could have if I wanted to use BiGG, as we talked about. I believe that was there, but I wasn't. I don't know how often they were looking at it. I would guess this week because of what was going on, I bet you they were looking at it quite often.

Q. I guess my question is a little bit different.

The -- if someone registered for a loan, would that be reflected immediately or is there a lapse between that happening and that information being reflected in the system?

- A. Good question. A data person would be better at telling us what the time delay may have been back then. Maybe it was an hour. Yeah, I -- I don't know what, you know, how often the database reloaded.
- Q. Do you know who would know that information?

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- account executives. And if, you know, there's a
 problem from registration to close, they would want
 to be talking to brokers, saying, hey, what's
 wrong? Is there a concern? So I -- I imagine that
 that was data that he had -- was -- was able to
 access.
 - Q. Would you be able to access pull-through data in the BiGG data repository?
 - A. I don't know. And I don't know because there had been some technology changes on the wholesale side.
 And I just don't know if that data at that time was going into BiGG.
 - Q. Would you equate the registrations that we're talking about here with volume?
 - A. Well -- well, it's a loan, and so it would be units or volume. I -- I probably wasn't equating it with one -- one or the other. Thinking back, I don't know if I was equating it to a specific type of -- of market share.
 - Q. Moving on to the next sentence in the tweet: "More than 8,000 independent brokers have rejected becoming a controlled UWM branch."

How did you know that?

A. So we had information that was shared with me, again, from that -- in the same group of

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1 individuals. They had worked, I think, with other 2 people in stats or -- or whatnot to look at the 3 denominator, the number of brokers in America. 4 And then I think they scrubbed out 1,500 5

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or 2,000 that just were never doing business with either of us, so it wasn't -- we didn't want to include that in the denominator.

And then they took Mat Ishbia's direct comment that I think he had had 3,000 brokers sign the ultimatum. And so, the very simple math was if there are, whatever it was, 14,000-some registered brokers and 12,000 have done business with either of us, and 3,000 or so Mat claims he's got in the ultimatum, that left a balance of 8 or 9,000 brokers that had not accepted his ultimatum.

And he made it very clear that either you do it by this date, I think he said, or he was going to -- I think he said at the time, "I won't -- I won't kill loans out of my pipeline," meaning, once you have made application, I won't kick the client to the curb. That would be a disaster. But "you won't be allowed to put another loan in my pipeline."

Q. Do you know if more than 8,000 independent brokers actually rejected becoming a controlled UWM branch,

- up, that would be your -- your loan volume.
- Q. But you didn't specify one way or another in this tweet that that's what you were referring to, riaht?
- A. What's that?
 - Q. Whether you were referring to closed-loan volume or just loan volume.
 - A. No. Like we talked about at the beginning of this deposition, volume can mean -- it's a very broad word that can mean a lot of different things.

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Let's do Tab 28,

Derick.

THE WITNESS: Now, you've got me wondering how many characters were left in my tweet.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. My next exhibit might give you some insight into that.
- 19 A. Okav.
 - Q. So you have just been shown what's marked Farner No. 10. And if you could just take some time to review it, and let me know when you are ready.
 - A. Okay.

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MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION:

DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 10

Text Chain

4 4:06 p.m.

A. Okay.

6 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. Do you know what this is?
- 8 A. It seems like a compilation of a text chain and 9 some other kind of documents about marketing 10 materials and a picture of Mat Ishbia.
- 11 Q. Is (734) 552-6469 your cell phone number?
 - A. It is.
- 13 Q. Do you recall this being an exchange through text 14 messages on your phone?
 - A. Or is there -- and I'm not trying to be difficult. Is there another option? Or --
 - O. Could it have been a Slack conversation or something like that?
 - A. Oh, okay.
- 20 Q. So I can reask the question.

Do you recall this being an exchange between text messages on an -- a cell phone?

- A. I think it was text messages.
 - Q. And what are the text messages in this chat describing?

1 or was it that they didn't respond to the 2 ultimatum? 3

- A. Well, again, because of my understanding, the fact of not -- and he was very adamant -- the fact of not responding because he gave them a deadline, was a rejection.
- Q. So if you look at the next sentence in the tweet, "The results? Volume is up significantly at @rocketproTPO!"

What did you mean by "volume is up significantly @rocketproTPO!"?

- A. Going back to the conversation that we had just had about registrations, so that's a loan coming in, and so I imagine someone would have shown me that when you tabulate the loan volume of these registrations, it's up from before the ultimatum, and that Rocket Pro TPO is that -- that wholesale
- Q. When you say you "tabulate the loan volume of those registrations," do you mean closed-loan volume?
- A. No. I mean -- remember we said registrations, when the broker says, look, I'm making -- I'm sending you a loan for application.

And so you tabulate the volume of that each one has a loan balance. And if you add those

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1 A. It's a discussion around the ultimatum.

Q. If we go to the bottom of page 741, three chats from the bottom, at 10:17 a.m., were you texted: "Aaron, write up a tweet for me"?

Do you see that?

6 A. I'm sorry. I'm at 740.

741. Okay.

I do.

Q. Okay. And if you go to page 742, at 10:55 a.m., Aaron Emerson sent you the suggested tweet, right?

A. Yeah

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Q. And if you go to the bottom of that page at 742, do you see at 12:06 p.m., you write: "Adjusted suggested tweet."

And on the next page, there is the adjusted suggested tweet, and you write, "Does it fit?"

Do you see that?

A. Yeah.

Q. If you could go to page 744, if you look at your message at 1:05 p.m., you write: "There are 12k plus brokers in the US. Ish claims he had 4,000 signed (don't believe him). 12 minus 4 equals 8, do the fucking math Crain's. Every broker that didn't sign goes to his site and gets the pop-up with Crain's publication. Crain's is wanting to discuss negative things.

And I'm interested in talking about positive things. As I talked to you about before, an opportunity to grow.

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And so there's a list of people who we were partnered with, and I'm encouraging Casey to talk to them and get out and make sure that they're also talking positive things about our company.

Q. When you say, "talking positive things about our company," did you mean to the media?

A. Media, friends, family, you know, we just -- we had a large group of people that we sponsored, and now we're getting negative, you know, press created by this.

And there were so many great things for us to be discussing, why not use the people that we have paid to represent us to talk positively about us?

Q. In the first text message, who are "the folks at WJR"?

22 A. That's a local radio station here.

Q. And in the next two text messages you referred to Barry Sanders and Larry Fitzgerald.

Were they in some way working with

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that they can (sic) submit loans. Send them the screenshot." $% \begin{center} \$

Do you see that?

- A. Yeah, can't submit loans. Yes.
- Q. Thank you for the correction.

Are you referring -- who are you referring to when you say "Ish"?

- A. Mat Ishbia. I think later -- somewhere in here, I read the news -- news article where they did -- I thought, where the spokesman confirmed that not all 4,000 had signed, so...
- Q. If you could go back to page 741, the very first text message at the top.
- 14 A. Yes
 - Q. Can you describe to me what's happening in this conversation between you, Casey Hurbis and others?
 - A. I think, as we had discussed, after a multitude of what I thought was kind of inappropriate business practices, we were now dealing with this.

And if I'm -- Casey Hurbis, who's our CMO, and so I am mentioning that we have done for 35 years a great job, best places to work, countless J.D. Power Awards. There's a lot of positive things.

And at the time, I think we were dealing

Rocket at the time?

- A. Yes. I -- I believe we had a sponsorship with Barry locally, and I believe we had a sponsorship with -- Larry Fitzgerald at the time was a, I think, wide receiver for the Arizona Cardinals, so a national sponsorship with him.
- Q. And just a few texts down, what about Jason Momoa, Tracy Morgan, and the WWE guy, and the social influencer gal?
- A. Yeah. Obviously, I don't know who they -- who they are. But I think these were people -- we had done some Super Bowl ads with Jason and with Tracy Morgan.
- Q. Were you also working with the commissioner of the PGA or the commissioner of the NFL?
- A. We host a golf tourn- -- PGA golf tournament here every year in the City of Detroit, the first golf tournament ever in the City of Detroit to help the City. And we have a -- I think, at this time, an NFL sponsorship.
- Q. And you wanted the President of the United States to come out for Rocket?
 - A. I don't believe so, no. I think what I was referencing -- because sometimes people will say, oh, they won't do it. What I was referencing is --

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absolutely done begging people to do the right thing."

3 Did you end up terminating anyone's 4 contract due to them not coming out for Rocket on 5 the UWM ultimatum?

- A. Not that I'm aware of, no. I think I was just a little hot under the collar at the time.
 - Q. How did you know Tom Izzo wasn't willing to take a stand on behalf of Rocket?
- 10 A. I had talked to Tom in the past.
 - Q. You had talked to Tom in this two-week time frame about the UWM ultimatum?
- 13
 - Q. But you knew that Tom Izzo wasn't willing to take a stand against UWM?
 - A. I had talked to Tom in the past about some of the concerns that I already surfaced with you about the flyers, the sexual comments about my team member's wife. And just said to Tom, because Tom knew Mr. Ishbia, Hey, you know, do you like these comments? We're sponsoring Michigan State, and I don't like how this feels. You know, you know this guy. You know, how do you feel about this? Tom didn't seem to care. ATTORNEY SCOTT: Yes, Ishbia was a bench

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Let's -- let's not take that bait. Let's get out there and talk positive about all the great things we're doing, and let's be a little, what I call, street here. Let's use all the assets that we already have at our disposal.

again, I won't read it, but "I had noticed the

it must have been a topic during that time.

fact that it's kind of funny -- not funny, but --

if you will look at the sentence above, that's a

unions trying to penetrate Amazon."

stand on this.

the previous years.

President of the United States had no problem

commenting on the Governor of New York or the

And I can't remember what he said, but

And so, I was kind of commenting on the

reference to Tom Izzo, who we also are a sponsor at

And so I'm kind of having a -- I'm kind

Michigan State, and Tom was not willing to take a

of suggesting that, like, I mean, all these people

stories to tell. We do a good job. We have the

highest client service rating in America.

that we have brought onboard -- and we have good

Instead of getting wrapped up in this,

a broker, and you can -- you could only use me, you

been gaining market share on them in Q3 and Q4 of

you know, not-good-for-business situation, where

he's basically telling people, even though you are

can't use a competitor, because I'm afraid of

them -- and I think if we go back and look, we'd

Q. On the message that you started reading before about the President of the United States, you write: "I know we helped with big dollars for his inauguration. Shouldn't he be speaking out against anticompetitive action? Get with RGR team."

What is the RGR team?

A. Something with government relations. And so -- and I think I brought up this earlier, but -- and I think there may have been a few lawsuits actually filed, but this is anticompetitive, to force someone to not use a competitor.

That would be like Ford Motor Company saying, If you buy a General Motors product, you can never buy a Ford product again.

So isn't that worth bringing certainly to the government and whoever makes these rules?

Q. If you go up a little bit to the message you send at 10:14 a.m. I think it's -- yeah. You write: "Anyone who does not get onboard we will work to terminate their contracts immediately. I'm

warmer at Michigan State, right? THE WITNESS: Yeah.

Sorry.

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: No. That's okay.

Are you testifying, Jeff?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: No, I'm just saying.

It's an observation.

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: I'm kidding.

THE WITNESS: That's how Tom knew him.

ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Okay.

11 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Yeah, that's how Tom 12 knew him.

13 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Let's go to Tab 25, 14

Derick.

MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION: **DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 11**

Email to Peter Giacchi

4:21 p.m.

A. Different --

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. Yes, you can put that one aside.

So, Mr. Farner, you've just been handed what's marked as Exhibit Farner 11. If you could just read it and let me know when you're ready.

A. Okay.

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Q. So this is an email from you to Peter Giacchi, copying others. Who is Peter Giacchi?

A. I think he was a member of Citadel Securities, who was a, you know, an investor or possible investor.
 I'm not even sure if they actually had investments in Rocket or not at the time.

But it was somebody we knew that was just sharing, I think, a Wall Street Journal article about the fact this -- this was in September or -- September, we had just gone public a month earlier -- about the fact that the stock was bouncing around. And it just -- I think the Wall Street Journal article or something or maybe it's him, I don't know who created the bullet point, it says, the market is just undecided about how to think about our company.

- Q. So do you see the "re" line under "Subject," where it says: "Moving below \$25"?
- 19 A. I do.

- Q. Are you referring to Rocket moving below \$25 ashare?
- A. Yeah, I'm trying to see -- because I can't -- I
 can't see this. I don't if I -- am I -- this looks
 like a chain where I'm -- I'm replying.
 - Q. Mm-hmm.

like maybe he sends another, like, a separate, you know, maybe related but separate chain three hours later. And now he's changed the subject line to where the shares are trading.

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And then this next one, we don't see a subject line, but I'm wondering if the subject line he had in the next one was "Moving below 25." I just -- I'm saying I think I'm responding to -- to him. I'm -- I didn't create the subject line.

I -- I don't think I was watching the 5:00 to 8:00 a.m. movement of the stock.

- Q. Do you think the market was having a hard time understanding what kind of company Rocket was at this time?
- A. Yeah, as we've been kind of talking about all day, there wasn't another company that had all the things that we had from a marketing, servicing, retention, and other -- there wasn't other companies viewing the lifetime value of a client that -- the way that we were. And that's normal. I mean, we were public for 30 days.

And going back, remember, we -- we decided to do the IPO, we started talking about it in '19, the fall of '19 after Dan had had a stroke. He had said, Look, I'd like to do something. I'd

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A. But the heading -- the headings -- it says: "Heard on" -- I just can't tell if I typed that or that's -- doesn't sound like something I would type, or someone else typed that and I'm responding to it. I'm just trying to make...

- Q. So if you start at the very bottom --
- 7 A. Yeah.
 - Q. -- on page 423, it looks like Peter Giacchi is emailing you and others at Rocket.
 - A. Correct.
- Q. And the subject is: "Rocket in 'Heard in theStreet' column, WSJ."
- 13 A. Correct.
- 14 Q. Right?

And then if you look below, it says:
"Rocket WSJ's 'Heard on the Street' column expects
trading in Rocket Companies to be volatile for some
time."

- 19 A. Yeah.
- Q. And then parentheses "\$26.49."
- A. Right. And that's what I was referencing. It's a
 discussion about the marketing trying to figure out
 what type of -- what company we are.

Where I'm getting a little lost is so you can see that subject line, and then it seems

like to raise roughly \$3 billion or so. And then the pandemic hit. And then we weren't sure if we could or should do it. And then the -- and then we worked our way through, making sure we still were going to have a business.

But it was a much different, what they call, road show in the -- you know, up to this point in time, people, like, were traveling and visiting and being able to share their story about what kind of company they -- they had. We -- that was an abridged process for us on Zoom calls. It was -- it was choppy.

And so I think for our company, that just added to the challenges that people might have, like, okay, wait, who are these guys? You know, they're doing great things, but we still had to work to explain to -- to people how the company worked.

- Q. Do you think that by the first quarter of 2021, the market had an understanding of what kind of company Rocket was?
- A. Based on conversations that I had -- and you could see the questions and so forth -- no, I don't think we had gotten there yet, with people really understanding the full platform that we were

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1 building.

- Q. When did you leave Rocket?
- A. Officially, I left Rocket the last day or maybe the first day of June in 2023.
 - Q. Why did you leave Rocket?
- A. It was time for me to go spend more time with mykids.
 - Q. Do you think that as of June of 2023 the market had an understanding of what kind of company Rocket was?
 - A. I don't know in June because I had been transitioning a lot of my work to Bill Emerson from February to June, so I wasn't as in tune with what happened in the spring of that year.
 - Q. What about in February of 2023, do you think the market had an understanding of what kind of a company Rocket was at that time?
 - A. That's a good question. I -- I don't know. We were probably spending less time communicating. I thought it was a great -- again, I bought a lot of stock in that year because I thought it was a very good time to be buying the stock, understanding the company and its value.

But that would be a better question for like a Brian Brown or a Julie Booth, probably spent

- process to -- to educate, but it is -- it was what it was.
 - Q. Were you concerned at all during the relevant time period that analysts were focusing too much on growth quarter over quarter versus growth year over year?
 - A. I wouldn't say I was concerned either way. You can probably see from my statement here: "Oh, well, we'll just keep writing loans and making billions."

I'm basically saying I don't want to get wrapped up in the day-to-day movements of this stock. I can't control it. But what we can do is keep proving out the strategies. We can keep growing the client base. And over time my belief was that people would see that, and they would have a better and better understanding of the company.

- Q. Did Rocket track internally during the relevant time period the analysts' consensus?
- A. To?
- Q. Let me withdraw that question.

Do you have an understanding of what analysts' consensus for quarterly earnings, for example?

A. I know there are analysts. The con- -- the word "consensus" I'm maybe a little less -- because I

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more time talking to analysts during that period.

Q. So just going back to the -- the time period that we're talking about, the relevant time period between August 2020 and the end of May of 2021.

When you say you didn't think the market had a good understanding of what kind of company Rocket was, do you mean that they were focused too much on short-term growth versus long-term growth?

A. I don't know if they were focused on short- or long-term growth. I think the concept of the millions of clients in our database, our ability to bring clients in on a different product besides a mortgage, at a lower cost to acquire, and then later turn that client into a mortgage, you know, they were still -- they were still figuring that out.

One of the discussions we had had over time, there were different sets of analysts. Some analysts were traditional finance mortgage analysts. Some analysts were FinTech analysts. Some analysts were real estate analysts. You could watch and see that depending on the analyst, they even viewed the company a little differently.

And, again, I'll go back to our -- you know, I wish we had more time through that IPO

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think that's a -- again, a numerator/denominator type issue. So I think you would be moving around, depending on which analyst, when they updated their numbers. We -- we were -- because we had the data. We're updating numbers pretty regularly, weekly or so forth. But you could bump into analysts who would update numbers in mid January and not do the numbers again until the earnings call.

And so someone might say, well, there's a consensus, but if you really peel the numbers back, you've just got analysts who are covering a lot of companies who just haven't spent any time even updating the numbers. And so I was always cautious about those comparisons because I knew our -- where our data was, but I'm not -- was even sure their data was relevant, timely, or accurate.

- Q. I think you just said you were updating the weekly numbers. What did you mean by that?
- A. Well, as -- we talked about it on -- on BiGG. You could -- once loans closed or things -- that data is available to you, looking backwards.

So I guess my point was, not specifically that we were doing, but just that we had the data so we have the ability to do that. Where an analyst, I don't know how often they look

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1 at it or do it.

- Q. Did analysts have access to the information that was housed in the BiGG database?
- A. Analysts would have access to similar information. They wouldn't be getting it from -- from BiGG. But, certainly, in terms of closed loans, securitizations, a lot of that information is going to be public. You're going to see capital markets trading in the Bloomberg. And so they probably have more access to -- than me, based on their -- what they do for a living, to go in and look at that -- that information.

So I would say those types of things, they have access to MBA forecasts. They have access to Fannie and Freddie. They have access to the ten-year Treasury. We did not give them access on like how many team members worked there on a daily basis or things like that.

- Q. Did analysts have access to registrations on a weekly basis?
- A. There are reporting companies or -- or like magazines, IMF is one of them, that do report originations. I couldn't tell you how often they do that. But remember, we also gave guidance for the quarter we were in and the upcoming quarter.

analysts not have access to?

A. We -- we touched on that. Team member data and information.

I want to be clear, we didn't have analysts access to -- to our BiGG. What I'm trying to do is compare the data that's in there that they could probably find other ways from the data that I don't know how they would -- they would find.

So, you know, again, team members -- I don't think they could find out how many phone calls we made on a daily basis or how many emails we sent out on a daily basis. They can look backwards into our marketing information, but they wouldn't see how many leads we generated on a daily basis.

Q. Would analysts know what Rocket's pull-through was either in the retail channel or the TPO?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form.

A. That's a good question. When we sell the vast majority of our loans -- FHA, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac -- there's a ton of reporting on how our loans perform in those sorts of things, so defining pull-through, because we talked about there being a lot different definitions of it, certain definitions of that I think they could probably get

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So we were giving them, again, as close to relevant data without providing something that no one could predict.

Q. Did analysts have access to weekly gain-on-sale margin?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form. You can answer.

THE WITNESS: Okay.

A. Whether that's Rocket or Shore or Fairway or Wells Fargo, my understanding is, again, because we're trading and hedging, they can -- they can look and figure out kind of where Rocket is pricing based on the trades we're making or the hedges we're doing; and, again, we -- you wouldn't use weekly gain on -- we talked about this is a lot. It's just there's so many variables about what can make that go up and down over time, a marketing incentive, a banker incentive.

But what we tried to provide was, as you know, the gain-on-sale margin for the quarter we were reporting and also that -- that future quarter to give them some insight into our best, you know, thought about where it would be.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. What metrics that were houses indeed BiGG did

to through using other reporting sources.

- Q. So would analysts be able to determine what the current pull-through was at Rocket at any given point based on outside sources?
- A. Again, we have to define, when you say "pull-through," what you're specifying?
- Q. So when I'm talking about pull-through, I mean the time it takes from someone applying for a loan to that loan being closed.

Would analysts have accessed that internal data from Rocket?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form. You can answer.

THE WITNESS OF

THE WITNESS: Okay.

A. So that's like a turn time. And I believe we -this, again, would be a better -- a better question
for Austin Niemiec or Heather Lovier, but I believe
we shared turn times with the broker community. I
don't know if we -- the J.D. Power report that I
was referencing, I believe that also spoke to
Rocket's turn times.

So they might not have the most -- you know, the next day or the next week, but I think there's data out there that helped shed light on what our -- our turn times might be.

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Page 244

1 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. Was there data out there that said what your turn times actually were?
- A. The -- the two things I just mentioned, I think we were the ones that gave the data.
- Q. I'm just asking because I think your response was what turn times might be.

My question was: Was there data out there that said what your turn times actually were?

A. Yeah. Again, with the caveat of probably reaching out to the people that are closer to this than me.

My understanding was that we shared this with the broker community quite regularly because they were interested in how quickly a loan would turn. And I believe we shared it with J.D. Power as well because that was part of their client service rating. And I have no reason to believe that the data we shared which, obviously, is public, I believe we shared our -- our real data.

- Q. How often do you share that data with J.D. Power?
- A. I don't know how often they required it. They gave us the award once a year. I don't know the frequency of the data being shared.
- Q. So just to go back to my earlier question for pull-through percentage, how long would it take to

A. I would say that we're in the USA mortgage market which is a commodity business driven by the federal government. I would -- there are probably industries that have more available data, but it would be hard for me to think of them.

This is an industry where a considerable portion of how you're performing or what you're doing is tracked by government agencies, as I talked about before, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, FHA, state regulators, federal regulators. There's just a ton of reporting that exists out there to make people pretty smart about the mortgage business.

Q. So if it's true that analysts knew what was going on with Rocket based on publicly available information, why would analysts who followed Rocket come up with different numbers in terms of how they believed Rocket was going to do for a given quarter?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form.

A. Yeah, I would say that's above my pay grade in terms of how they do their modeling.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

Q. Was it important to Rocket to track how analysts viewed the company?

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go from a loan lock to close, to a closed loan?

A. Okay. I didn't remember you asking me that before. Depends on the time frame. In 2020, we'd go from whatever 2 1/2 trillion to 4 1/2 trillion of mortgages. We didn't double the number of appraisers in the country.

And, in fact, even -- even the appraisers that were there, because of COVID and also couldn't get in people's houses, so turn times got much longer. And, again, that was well known in the industry, appraisers were talking about it, et cetera, et cetera.

In a market where there's less demand, turn times typically speed up. And I -- you know, again, I believe that I've seen this reported in like, you know, a Motley Fool or other people that rate mortgage companies. But it -- it just depends on what's happening in the economy or in the world, I guess, that turn times can go up and down.

- Q. What other metrics did analysts not have access to that were housed in the BiGG database?
- A. I don't know.
- Q. But you're saying analysts could figure out what was going on in Rocket just based on publicly available information?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form.

- 2 A. In -- in what way or why or, I guess help me.
 - BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
- 4 Q. Let me ask it a different way.
 - A. Okay.
- 6 O. I'll withdraw that guestion.

Did Rocket review reports that were published by Rocket from analysts?

A. I would say that those reports -- the IR team would look at those. Their job was to interact with analysts and investors. And, occasionally, those reports might be shared.

As you can probably tell from some of my communication, again, in -- in -- March 2nd or 3rd when the stock price went up to, whatever it was, \$38 a share for -- there's nothing different between March 1st and March 3rd, except for a bunch of investors that shorted our stock, and they were getting squeezed by meme or retail traders is my understanding.

If you -- it may be interesting, a gentleman I know who ran a public company for a long time, said, look, that's -- it's always in- -- the company you're involved with, it's interesting to watch or ask questions, but you -- you don't

Page 245 Page 247 1 control that. 1 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Derick, did you 2 2 So the same philosophy around analysts, introduce Tab 10 as the next exhibit. 3 3 if they have good feedback, if they're saying, MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION: 4 4 **DEPOSITION EXHIBIT 12** Listen, we're -- we're not understanding a portion 5 of your business and we'd like to, and there's 5 **Email from Natasha Cooksey** 6 6 something we can educate them on that's within the 5:03 p.m. 7 7 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: legal, proper bounds, certainly. 8 8 But if you invest -- Dan Gilbert used to Q. Mr. Farner, you have been handed Exhibit Farner 12. 9 9 If you could take some time to review it. There's say: This is a get rich slow scheme. If you 10 invest in your people, in your clients over long 10 a lot of information in there. I'm only going to 11 11 periods of time, your business will grow. have a question about a few pages. But please take 12 And that's a better view, I think, than 12 the time to familiarize yourself and then let me 13 13 worrying about an analyst saying the ten-year know when you're ready. 14 14 A. Thank you. Treasury is reaching the highest level in 30 years so we don't think mortgages are going to do as 15 15 Q. Just so you know, I'll be focused mostly on page 314 thereabouts, ending 314 -- sorry, ending 014. 16 well. Of course, everybody knows that, but that 16 17 A. The Bates number? 17 could change next week. Let's focus on the big 18 Q. That's correct. 18 items that allow our company to be successful. 19 So I don't think they paid a lot of 19 A. Okay. Thanks. 20 attention to what analysts thought. 20 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Tell me the number you 21 Q. So you're saying it wasn't important to Rocket to 21 said you're focused on? 22 meet analysts' expectations for a given quarter? 22 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Let me make sure 23 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form. 23 I've got -- I've got the right one. Hold on a 24 A. Yeah. I don't know about the word "important." I 24 second. 25 would say that, again, going back to my experience, 25 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Yeah, I'm not sure it Page 248 Page 246 1 taking the company public, the inability to meet 1 is this. 2 2 with people, and build relationships, certainly you ATTORNEY SALDAMANDO: A couple of Bates 3 3 want to -- you want to have relationships and build numbers have the decimals. 4 trust. And so being thoughtful about what we told 4 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Oh, you're talking 5 5 people in earnings calls, to the best of our about the decimals. Then I got it. There are 6 6 ability with the information we had, that matters. decimals on some of the pages, yeah. So there's a 7 7 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Let's go to Tab 10, page that's 094, 15 of 19. 8 Derick. 8 THE WITNESS: Yeah. Uh-huh. 9 THE WITNESS: You have another water 9 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Yep, I got it. 10 10 A. Okay. I see 014. Did you say there was another over there somewhere. 11 ATTORNEY SCOTT: We've been going just 11 page as well? 12 about over an hour now, you want to --12 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 13 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: We can take a break. 13 Q. This is the page I wanted to ask questions about. 14 ATTORNEY SCOTT: You want to take a 14 A. Okay. I want to zip through these others, just to 15 15 quick break? make sure. Okay. 16 Q. Could you actually go back to the cover email. I 16 THE WITNESS: Yeah. VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Off the record at 17 just had a couple questions about that first. 17 18 4:46. 18 A. Okay. 19 (Off the record at 4:46 p.m.) 19 Q. So this is an email from Natasha Cooksey to you, 20 20 (Back on the record at 5:03 p.m.) Nicole McGrail, copying Brian Brown. And the 21 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: We are back on the 21 subject is "Monday Folder." 22 22 Do you have an understanding of what record. It's 5:03. 23 23 "Monday Folder" is? 24 24 A. Back in September of 2020, I'm guessing it's 25 25 information that they sent to me on -- on a Monday.

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But my practice of -- it's a lot of information here.

- Q. Did you request the information in the MondayFolder?
 - A. I don't believe so. I think that was a document that the finance team had put together.
 - Q. Did you ask the finance team to put information together for you that was reflected in the Monday Folder?
- A. Well, that I should -- I did not look a lot of time
 through the entire folder because we were going to
 focus on that one page. There -- there might be
 information that was of interest to me. Let me
 pause that.
 - Q. Let me -- you can review it but let me just ask it a different way.

Do you remember during the relevant time period receiving the Monday Folder Report?

- A. I believe that I did receive this report. I don't recall spending a lot of time on a regular basis looking at the report.
- Q. Was there a meeting to discuss the contents of the Monday Folder held during the relevant time period?
- A. No, I don't believe there were meetings around this.

was on October 2nd of 2020, which would put you into the end of the third quarter. So a Column C would probably be pretty accurate. But as you get into 4, you know, that's all they've done here, actually, it looks like.

You know, it probably becomes less accurate. I wonder if maybe the IR team, this would just help them as they were having communications with analysts to kind of gauge.

I -- I don't know. We'd have to probably ask them.

- Q. So you don't know why someone at Rocket would have prepared this slide comparing internal forecasts to analysts' consensus average?
- A. Yes, I don't know how they were -- or what their -- what their purpose was in using this.
- Q. Are you familiar with the concept of a trading window?

You can put that document to the side.

A. Oh, yeah, I was just noticing here it said: "Consensus average based on analysts' coverage as of September 14th." We were talking about this earlier, which is two weeks pre this report. And my experience is analysts don't update every single day, so let's say they updated 30 days prior, you are looking at data that we've updated probably on

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Q. Okay. So now if you want to go to the Bates ending .014, which I have as 17 out of 65 in the PowerPoint. And the top of it says: "Rocket Internal Forecast Versus Analyst Consensus Average."

Just let me know when you're there.

7 A. 0014?

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- Q. Correct.
- A. Yeah. Okay.
 - Q. Do you know why this slide was prepared?
 - A. In looking through this folder, it looks to me like the finance team or Natasha Cooksey, who I think was Brian Brown's assistant, has taken a variety of other stuff, for lack of a better term, and kind of mishmashed it all together.

This particular document may have been something that the IR team was looking at. But I can't say for certain what the -- what her decision-making process was to select what went into this -- into this batch of stuff.

- Q. Why did Rocket prepare a report of its own internal forecast versus analysts' consensus?
- A. Again, probably would need to track back who this was, you know, created for and ask them. Because as -- as we have been talking about all day, this

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the 2nd and comparing it to a consensus that is probably 30, 45, 60 days dated.

So back to your question about why would somebody do this. It's -- I don't know any rationale for using dated information to make any decisions. Interesting tidbit.

I'm sorry. What was your question?

- Q. Are you familiar with the concept of a trading window?
- A. I am.
 - Q. Why do publicly traded companies set up trading windows?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form.

A. This is probably a better question for Angelo Vitale. My understanding of a trading window is that it tells our team members when they could buy or sell shares without talking to an attorney. I don't know if that totally, you know, changes, but I know for us, if we -- Angelo would open and close the window. If we closed a window, then we had to go and talk to general counsel and go through a process if we wanted to reopen a window to -- to trade.

So I think it gives dates of when you can or can't trade the stock. And I don't know if

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Page 255

- 1 that's the SEC. I don't know the foundation about 2 how that was established. 3
- BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

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- 4 Q. Did Rocket have a calendar with trading windows on 5
 - A. Yeah, we -- we may have. Again, Angelo would know that. I can just recall receiving emails from Angelo about -- to the company about when the window was open and when the window was closed.
 - Q. Do you think trading windows are important for public companies to have?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to the form.

A. I would have to imagine there's some logical thinking behind them. I think providing clarity to our team members is important and also providing training and/or avenues to reach out if they had questions about what they were doing.

Again, we had just become a public company, based on the last document you gave me, a month prior. And so people were learning. But I'm assuming that's why they exist, is to set some, you know, guidelines for people about when they can and can't trade or at least to know to raise their hand and ask questions.

Q. Do you have an understanding of what material

\$1.8 billion of RHI.

And so that meant that we continued our process to see if there was other opportunities. So one time that I would have been involved with that would have been, as we got into late March, you know, the stock price had gotten to a more fair level and we discussed the possibility of continuing the process we had started in August.

So I believe we, at that point in time, had to go through the process of opening the trading window, and it didn't work out. There was no proper stock price. We closed it. Then I think we went and opened it again. Again, I don't think there was an active buyer or a proper stock price. We closed it.

And then we received an inbound phone call from Morgan Stanley telling us that they had a buyer. And we were talking before about that meme. My understanding later was that some large hedge -hedge funds were covering their short position and needed to buy the stock. And so we -- we had an opportunity to sell.

Then I think it may have been before that, but -- but certainly after that, we had put a policy in place, 10b5-1 or something, where the

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nonpublic information is?

- A. I would say that I probably have a general layperson's business understanding. I would also say that that -- the way it's been described to me over the years is an important legal discussion. And so if I was ever in a position, and I think I was on two or three occasions, I would go to Angelo or Tina or both and have a discussion with them about what it really meant in context of whatever we were talking about.
- Q. What were the two or three occasions that you're referring to?
- A. Well -- so -- so we had taken the company public August of 2020 -- August of 2020 -- with the mission to, I think, do about 3-, 3.2 billion dollar (sic), because Dan -- for a year prior, after Dan's stroke, he had been talking about. It was important for a variety of reasons: One, being that we wanted to have some extra capital to support the business, and he wanted to, of course, support his initiatives in Detroit and charity, et cetera.

So we worked to take the company public, but we fell short of the amount that we were looking to sell. I think we did closer to

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company could set a target -- price target and -and buy shares. So if we thought that the stock price was at a level that was a good use of our capital. So I think we had to go through that same process at that point in time.

Then later when I personally wanted to buy shares, I had to activate that process with Angelo and so forth to set up my 10b5 (sic) plan. So I think those are probably the three occasions that I went -- that I went through that.

- Q. When you said "there was no proper stock price," what did you mean by that?
- A. I think I and others had a pretty firm view of what the value of the organization was, and so if we weren't able to sell the stock at a price that I thought was fair, we weren't going to sell it.

And so even earlier on, going back to -even though we knew we wanted to reach that \$3 billion number that Dan had set, there just didn't present an opportunity. And honestly didn't think there was going to be an opportunity.

I left to take my daughter on college visits down south. Then I got a phone call that Monday when I was heading to Clemson saying, we got this phone call and Morgan Stanley wants to buy the

Pages 253 to 256

	Page 257		Page 259
1	stock, so okay.	1	BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:
2	Q. When you are talking about Morgan Stanley wanting	2	Q. Mr. Farner, you have been handed Exhibit 13. If
3	to buy the stock, are you referring to the	3	you could just review it and let me know when
4	March 29th, 2021, trade for \$500 million of Rocket	4	you're ready.
5	stock?	5	A. Okay.
6	A. That's correct.	6	Q. Do you know what this is?
7	Q. And who was the buyer?	7	A. It looks like a text message or exchange between me
8	A. Oh, boy, at the end of the day, I think someone had	8	and a few other people.
9	shared with me that it was a hedge fund. I'll get	9	Q. Do you remember having this text message exchange?
10	the name wrong. But I think it was one of these	10	A. I do. I think I was kind of on the road at this
11	hedge funds that had gotten caught up earlier that	11	time. But I think I was kind of popping in every,
12	month in the meme trading, and they'd been shorting	12	you know, every bit when I pulled over to the side
13	our stock, and I think they were covering their	13	of the road or stopped or or whatever. But this
14	position. Again, the way it had been explained to	14	looks familiar to me.
15	me.	15	Q. Why were you discussing the \$500 million trade by
16	Q. So was it only one buyer for	16	RHI?
17	A. Well	17	A. Well, because RHI is the seller of the of the
18	Q the stock?	18	stock.
19	A yeah, technically the way it's been explained to	19	Q. Why was Rocket interested in being involved in the
20	me is we didn't we sold the stock to Morgan	20	logistics of the RHI trade?
21	Stanley. It was their they then, you know, did	21	A. Okay. Now we're going to go we're going to go
22	whatever they did. And maybe they disclosed to us	22	back to a complex diagram a tax guy showed me many
23	that it was this hedge fund, but for us, it was to	23	years ago.
24	Morgan Stanley.	24	Dan and RHI own the stock in all these
25	Q. Do you know for certain what Morgan Stanley did	25	companies. My understanding is that RHI has to
1	Page 258		Page 260
	with the stock that it nurchased?	1	PHI is not a public company. So to get the stock
	with the stock that it purchased? A Again, what was explained to me was that the reason	1 2	RHI is not a public company. So to get the stock
2	A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason	2	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A
2 3	A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason they received this inbound call was that somebody	2 3	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A shares at Rocket, RHI has to exchange those shares
2 3 4	A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason they received this inbound call was that somebody was in trouble and needed to cover their their	2 3 4	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A shares at Rocket, RHI has to exchange those shares with shares at RCI. And then once that is approved
2 3 4 5	A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason they received this inbound call was that somebody was in trouble and needed to cover their their short position. But Scott Elkins or somebody else	2 3 4 5	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A shares at Rocket, RHI has to exchange those shares with shares at RCI. And then once that is approved or done, then those shares can flow to Rocket to be
2 3 4	A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason they received this inbound call was that somebody was in trouble and needed to cover their their short position. But Scott Elkins or somebody else who actually dealt with it would know better than I	2 3 4 5 6	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A shares at Rocket, RHI has to exchange those shares with shares at RCI. And then once that is approved or done, then those shares can flow to Rocket to be sold. Because, like I said before, RHI is still
2 3 4 5 6 7	A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason they received this inbound call was that somebody was in trouble and needed to cover their their short position. But Scott Elkins or somebody else who actually dealt with it would know better than I would.	2 3 4 5 6 7	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A shares at Rocket, RHI has to exchange those shares with shares at RCI. And then once that is approved or done, then those shares can flow to Rocket to be sold. Because, like I said before, RHI is still the 95 percent owner of all the assets that sit at
2 3 4 5 6	A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason they received this inbound call was that somebody was in trouble and needed to cover their their short position. But Scott Elkins or somebody else who actually dealt with it would know better than I would. Q. Who explained that to you?	2 3 4 5 6	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A shares at Rocket, RHI has to exchange those shares with shares at RCI. And then once that is approved or done, then those shares can flow to Rocket to be sold. Because, like I said before, RHI is still
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	 A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason they received this inbound call was that somebody was in trouble and needed to cover their their short position. But Scott Elkins or somebody else who actually dealt with it would know better than I would. Q. Who explained that to you? A. Oh, boy, that's a good question. At the time it 	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A shares at Rocket, RHI has to exchange those shares with shares at RCI. And then once that is approved or done, then those shares can flow to Rocket to be sold. Because, like I said before, RHI is still the 95 percent owner of all the assets that sit at Rocket. So it it took it takes both parties
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	 A. Again, what was explained to me was that the reason they received this inbound call was that somebody was in trouble and needed to cover their their short position. But Scott Elkins or somebody else who actually dealt with it would know better than I would. Q. Who explained that to you? A. Oh, boy, that's a good question. At the time it was happening, no one explained. We we didn't 	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	to convert it to, I think, what are called Class A shares at Rocket, RHI has to exchange those shares with shares at RCI. And then once that is approved or done, then those shares can flow to Rocket to be sold. Because, like I said before, RHI is still the 95 percent owner of all the assets that sit at Rocket. So it it took it takes both parties to to make the to make the function work. Q. I guess my question is: Why would Rocket have been
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Q. -- do you see where it says: "MS, JPM, and RBC are 1 IPO, a second checking on size and pricing"? 2 money in the

3 A. I do

- Q. Why would MS, JPM, and RBC be checking on size and pricing?
- A. Well, again, I believe that Mr. Elkins had fielded a call from Morgan Stanley, that there was interest in the market. But I think he also wanted to make sure that, you know, Morgan -- you're selling to -- to Morgan. You want to make sure that things are fair and the right size. Is it 500 million or is it 400 million? Is it -- so I think he was calling other possible buyers, Royal Bank of Canada or -- or JPMorgan Chase to see where they're -- they were, because they -- I think he's thinking, in all likelihood, they may be receiving the same inbound phone calls.

So he's just talking to them to say, okay, guys, the price is now up in the mid 20s, which was kind of the bare minimum, where we thought that it would make sense to sell. So are you there? Would you like to participate or what -- what size block and -- that's my guess.

Again, it's Scott, not me. I wasn't on the call, but that's my best guess of why he'd be

IPO, a secondary, a bond deal, everyone has to make money in the process. And so that's why there's a gap between the -- at that second stock price and what they're willing to offer us to buy \$500 million of it.

- Q. Why not sell the \$500 million directly into the market?
- A. You can't. There's no mechanism for that. It's not how it works. Even when you go IPO, the -- the investment banks go out and they -- they set up a book. It's not a retail investor involved. Right. They get Fidelity and they get all these large -- and they make this book.

What happened to us was the book was like 3.5 or 4 billion. That's what people said. It's called like level of interest.

Then you get closer and closer to the price and then you really figure -- figure out who's going to buy and who's not going to buy. Then those shares are traded and eventually some make it out to retail investors.

But my understanding is even all -even -- even a SPAC, which was popular, the right way or the regular way, I think they call this the regular way you sell to the investment banks, then

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doing that.

Q. Do you see where at 10:16 a.m. Scott Elkin says, "MS will buy 500 million between 24 to 24.50. Stock is at 26.92 as a reference"?

A. I do.

- Q. Why would you want to sell stock to Morgan Stanley at a discount to the currently trading stock price?
- A. My experience, even before we were public, we had done quite a few bond deals. Someone has to get paid. If you do an IPO or secondary, there's all kinds of banker fees. If you do a bond deal, you are negotiating -- I can remember to one time to the last second I'm negotiating with the bank, is it going a 6 1/4, 6 1/8.

Everyone's trying to get paid. That's probably why Scott was also reaching out to JPMorgan Chase and RBC. Because it's nice that the stock price is at 26.92, but that's simply a reflection of what a retail investor -- so very little volume could be moving that share price.

That's not a reflection of what someone would be willing to pay to buy a large chunk of stock. It's different. And so he's probably talking to make sure that's a fair price.

But my experience is whether it's an

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the investment banks are what distribute the shares to the retail investors because that's how they get paid. There's a spread between what they buy it for and what they sell it for.

And I take back when I said "you can't." I think there may be a way to go direct. I've never talked through it and it was described to me as, like, that's not what you do for a company like this. So I don't even know how that would happen.

Q. Do you see at 10:43 a.m., we're at the Bates ending 43, Scott writes: "Didn't want to ask too many and get a rumor that we are selling out on the market."

What's your understanding of what he's referring to?

ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection, form. You can answer.

A. Again, prob- -- probably a better question for Scott. I can tell you that I think a lot of confidence in companies, and particularly our company, was that the founder or the people who had been with the company for many decades were staying around and driving the company forward. We had a pretty good track record.

And without people understanding why you're selling, there's a few reasons to sell. You

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though it's Angelo's call, I believe at one of those -- maybe the first time we opened the window, he also involved the -- the audit committee in the discussion. I believe he involved Paul Weiss in the discussion.

most importantly to help accomplish those goals we talked about with the IPO. You don't want people thinking that Dan or I or others are leaving. And so Scott, I think, is trying to be thoughtful about not talking to too

could be raising capital that you need inside the

organization. In this particular case, these were

them into the market to help get float, but also

shares that Dan and RHI owned and so he's selling

So we would always follow a process to ensure that we were not making a decision based on nonpublic material information. We followed that process.

many bankers or getting rumors out there that could send the wrong message about how we feel about the company.

And whether it's Angelo or Tina or the audit committee or we took it to the board, I think all those individuals felt confident that we were fine. If we weren't, we would not have sold the stock. We did not need to sell the stock. As you can tell, we were doing fine as an organization.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

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So I believe we followed the process and everyone felt very good that we were totally in the clear to sell.

Q. If you go to the Bates ending 44 at 2:52 p.m., do you see where Scott Elkin says, "Evan at MS called to let me know they could not get it all out b/f" -- I'm guessing before -- "news broke and they lost money on the deal. He said 'that's in the big city and are big boys."

Q. Whose conclusion was it that you were in possession of material nonpublic information at the time this trade was made?

Do you have an understanding of why Morgan Stanley lost money on the deal?

A. Again, I'm familiar with the process. My process is to do a due diligence call with Angelo Vitale. I believe that he makes the decision, but I couldn't speak for him in terms of all the other

A. Well, I couldn't say that Morgan Stanley lost money on the deal. My experience would be that what people say to each other in this type of work doesn't necessarily reflect what reality is.

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Because I'd want -- if I was Morgan Stanley, I'd want Scott to think that they're heroes. These investment bankers are always working for business or the next deal and relationships matter.

But they agreed to buy the stock from us at a certain price that we agreed to. But as we've seen, the stock moves around. And so regardless of what price they've agreed to buy from us, there's no guarantee that in the market they're going -they've also struck a deal with the counterparty yet or it hasn't changed.

I don't know how they do that, but that would be my presumption. Again, if they lost money at all. I thought I saw another -- right above it it says that they made \$10 million, so who knows what the truth is.

Q. Was there any discussion around this time that the company shouldn't engage in this sale because it was in possession of material nonpublic information?

A. Well, we certainly followed the detailed process that we had put in place for that. So we did the diligence calls. We involved the --

I think, in this particular case, even

people that he may have relied on to ensure.

We had -- and we had hired Paul Weiss, which I've said they're one of best, and they correct me and say, no, we are the best at this in the world. So -- I'm getting a head shake. Maybe they're not.

ATTORNEY NELLES: Second best.

A. But he may have talked to them. They were very active in the process, but he would be the right person to discuss, I suppose, that which involved, you know, the different things he did once -- once we did the diligence calls with him.

BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS:

- Q. Did you believe that you were not in possession of material nonpublic information about Rocket at that time?
- A. Yes, I was not.
 - Q. You had no internal information that you thought was material that the market did not know at this time?
 - A. As I said before, that's why I went to Angelo. That's why I followed the process. That's why I did the due diligence so he could tell me, and as I should rely on my attorneys, to ensure that we are fine to open the window and trade. I'm not an

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Page 269 Page 271 1 1 attorney. So I wouldn't be the one trying to A. Yes, ma'am. 2 2 determine the legal definitions of those things. Q. Are you aware that there was a board meeting around 3 3 Q. Do you know what -- is it Anthony? Is that -- is the time of the March 29th, 2021, trade? 4 4 A. I believe there was a board meeting on March -- a that the name you said, the attorney? 5 5 A. Angelo. day -- within a day or two of my birthday, so 6 6 March 22 -- March 23rd, March 24th, right around Q. Angelo. 7 7 A. Angelo. that time period. 8 Q. Do you know what Angelo did to determine that you 8 Q. Did you attend that board meeting? 9 9 A. I did. were not in a position of material nonpublic 10 10 information? Q. Did you receive any information at that board 11 11 meeting that you would consider to be material ATTORNEY SLUTSKY: Mr. Farner, I'm just 12 going to caution you in answering that question to 12 nonpublic information? 13 not reveal any privileged communications that you A. Well, that was a long time ago, but I can't think 13 14 may have with Mr. Vitale. 14 of any information that was -- again, I'm going to 15 A. No, I don't know. 15 go back to maybe my business understanding. That's 16 16 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: why, again, I relied on Angelo because we had the 17 Q. Okay. Are you going to follow --17 call after. 18 But my business understanding is 18 A. I follow his --19 19 Q. -- your counsel's instructions? information that if it was given to someone in the 20 A. -- his advice, yes. 20 public would change their view on whether they 21 ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'm -- I'm not his 21 wanted to buy or sell the stock or, you know, 22 22 thought -- the valuation of the company. counsel. 23 23 A. Yeah, he's -- he's asserting --And I can't recall any information at 24 24 ATTORNEY SCOTT: I'm Rocket Companies' that date that, you know, I thought -- but, again, 25 counsel. I'm asserting Rocket Companies' 25 that's why I went to Angelo. That's why I followed Page 270 Page 272 1 1 the process. privilege. 2 2 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Got it. Q. So your testimony is you don't think there was any 3 3 information in the board materials that was 4 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 4 material nonpublic information? 5 5 Q. Is it your intent to rely at trial on the fact that ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to the form, 6 Angelo gave you the okay to do this trade. 6 asked and answered. 7 7 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form. A. I think I'm not the right person to make that legal 8 And I'm going to instruct you not to 8 determination. That's why I went to Angelo so he 9 answer that. 9 could help the process. 10 10 The question of whether or not he's BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 11 going to assert a reliance on advice-of-counsel 11 Q. So I'm not asking you for a legal conclusion. I'm 12 defense is attorney-client privileged information 12 asking you based on the CEO of the company who 13 and covered by work product. And I'm not going to 13 attended that board meeting, is it your position 14 have the witness testify to that. 14 that there was nothing in the board materials that 15 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Okay. Just to be 15 constituted material nonpublic information? 16 clear, if you are intending on relying upon that as 16 ATTORNEY SCOTT: So I'm going to object 17 17 a defense, I get to ask him questions about that, to form. It calls for a legal conclusion. 18 which is why I'm asking. 18 But you can give your business 19 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Right. So there's a 19 understanding. 20 20 way to go about it as a lawyer to figure that out. A. Yeah, I did. And -- and, yeah, I don't think I --21 You haven't fol- -- followed that way yet. So I'm 21 my role is to make a legal determination. That's 22 22 why we have a general counsel. That's why I went going to give him the instruction. 23 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 23 to the general counsel. 24 Q. Are you going to follow your attorney's 24 So I think you're asking me to somehow 25 25 instructions? become an attorney and tell you what an attorney

Page 273 Page 275 1 1 might say about the board meeting but I'm not closer to the \$3 billion that he had asked for. 2 equipped to do that, that's why I have a general 2 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Thank you. That's all 3 counsel. 3 the questions I have. 4 BY ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: 4 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Nothing further for 5 Q. Did Rocket publish its board meeting materials from 5 me. 6 6 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: That concludes the the March 2021 board meeting? 7 7 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Objection to form. deposition. Off the record. It's 5:51:13. 8 A. There may have been materials in the board meeting 8 ATTORNEY SLUTSKY: Can we not go off the 9 that we also shared in earnings calls or so forth. 9 record for a second. 10 But we didn't take the actual materials, that I'm 10 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Oh, I'm sorry. aware of, that were produced for the board 11 11 ATTORNEY SLUTSKY: That's okay. 12 meeting -- and when you say "publish," I -- I 12 Designate it confidential, the transcript. 13 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Oh, I think under the 13 suppose you mean, like, to the public -- right? --14 and give them out to the public that I'm aware of, 14 Rules, it's highly confidential for ten days from 15 15 the date of the deposition, the whole transcript, 16 16 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: I think we need a and then we have an opportunity to review it and 17 17 few minutes. I think we're getting close to time desig- -- dedesignate so... VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Okay. Off the 18 18 so can we take a short break? 19 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Sure. 19 record. 5:51:33. 20 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: We are off the 20 (The deposition was concluded at 21 record. 5:41. 21 5:51 p.m. Signature of the witness was not (Off the record at 5:41 p.m.) 22 requested by counsel for the respective parties 22 23 23 (Back on the record at 5:49 p.m.) hereto.) 24 VIDEO TECHNICIAN: We are back on the 24 25 record. 5:49. 25 Page 274 Page 276 1 ATTORNEY VILLEGAS: Mr. Farner, I have 1 CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY 2 2 no more questions for you at this time. STATE OF MICHIGAN) 3 3 ATTORNEY SCOTT: Jay, I have a couple 4 questions for you. 4 COUNTY OF WAYNE) 5 5 **EXAMINATION** 6 BY ATTORNEY SCOTT: 6 I, RENEE J. OGDEN, certify that this 7 7 Q. Was the decision to sell Rocket stock on March 29, deposition was taken before me on the date 8 2021, based on any information presented at the 8 hereinbefore set forth; that the foregoing 9 March 23, 2021, board meeting? 9 questions and answers were recorded by me 10 10 A. No, sir. We -- in fact, we opened the window, and stenographically and reduced to computer 11 after the meeting, we left the window closed. We 11 transcription; that this is a true, full and 12 only reopened it because of the inbound interest 12 correct transcript of my stenographic notes so 13 13 taken; and that I am not related to, nor of counsel we'd received and the fact that the stock price was 14 up in the mid 20s, which is where we had thought 14 to, either party nor interested in the event of 15 15 was a fair -- a fair price for the stock. this cause. 16 Q. Did -- did you discuss with Dan Gilbert the stock 16 17 17 sale that occurred on March 29, 2021, at any point 18 in March of 2021 before the sale occurred? 18 19 A. No, sir. Dan and I had talked a long time ago, 19 20 when we took the company public, about his desires 20 21 to get closer to the 3- or 3.2 billion. And, 21 22 22 RENEE J. OGDEN, CSR-3455 unfortunately, we did not achieve that at the time 23 of the IPO, but we -- we never really stopped the 23 Notary Public, 24 process. So Dan, I think, had confidence in us and 24 Wayne County, Michigan 25 25 knew that we were continuing to -- to try to get My Commission expires: June 21, 2025

22 JAY D. FARNER
23 Sworn to before me

this ____ day of _____, 2024.

25 Notary Public

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